BLUES MAGOOS NYC'S GARAGE-PSYCH KINGS

BOB STANLEY POP SCHOLAR

SIXTIES!

WIN!
ELECTRIC LOOKING GLASS/
VANITY MIRROR VINYL/
T-SHIRT BUNDLE

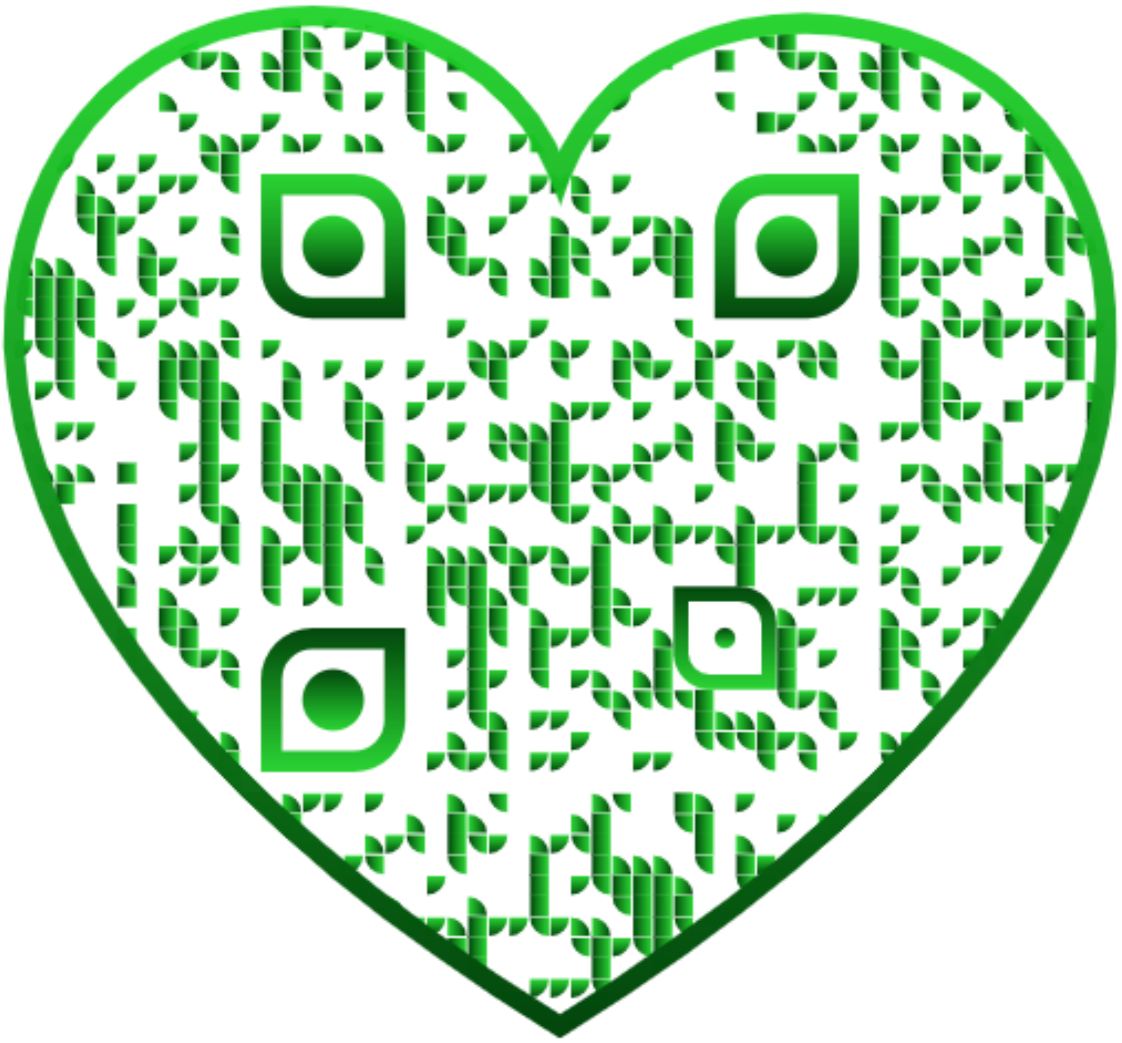
"YOU THOUGHT THE BEATLES WERE BAD. YOU GOT UP IN ARMS ABOUT THE ROLLING STONES. SONNY & CHER MADE YOU CRINGE. WELL, YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET!"

L.A. FREAK SCENE

starring ZAPPA, BEEFHEART, KIM FOWLEY, VITO PAULEKAS, WCPAEB, BYRDS and more!

LOCOMOTIVE • DAVE EVANS • PETE MOLINARI
THE WHO • CLYDIE KING • NICKY HOPKINS
BILLY TIBBALS • BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES

ISSUE 145 • £6.49
9 771754 361075 45



qobuz
REDISCOVER MUSIC

Music streaming, downloads, and beyond.
The most authentic sound quality.
First-class original editorial.
A committed community of music lovers.

QOBUZ.COM
JOIN FREE FOR 30 DAYS

Hi-Res AUDIO
Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play

SHINDIG!

contents

ISSUE 145, NOVEMBER 2023

Features

Harold Bronson 32
The record reviewer who founded Rhino Records

20 Questions 34
Pop star, writer, curator and unabashed music nerd Bob Stanley

Pete Molinari 40
From Kentish folk-blues to soulful sounds in Rome

Locomotive 44
The Brum blue-eyed soul/ska boys who became harbingers of prog-psych

Dave Evans 50
The forgotten great of the '70s folk scene

LA Freak Scene 62
Weirdos assemble! Zappa, Beefheart, Kim Fowley, Vito Paulekas, WCPAEB and the extended cast of LA's pre-hippie freak out

Regulars

Thoughts & Words 6
Your letters, tweets and emails

Shindiggin' 8
What's hot on the *Shindig!* turntable

Subscribers' Prize Draw 9
Subscribe to enter a Vanity Mirror/Electric Looking Glass draw

It's A Happening Thing 10
Billy Tibbals, Barrence Whitfield & The Savages, Nightmares In The Afternoon, Donovan, Harp, Hutch, Strangers In A Strange Land, Paul Chastain, *Uncanny*, Doc 'n Roll Festival

Family Album 26
Clydie King's 1970 funk/soul outing *Direct Me*

Songbook 28
"The greatest out-take of all-time?" The Who's 'Pure And Easy'

Deep Cuts 30
Session pianist supreme Nicky Hopkins' lesser-known moments

Reviews 70
The best in reissues, new releases, books and live shows

Prize Crossword 94
Win *Wig Out! Freak Out!* 2-LP comp

Vinyl Art 96
The Bar-Kays' *Do You See What I See?*

Vinyl Clicks 98
Terry Friend & Friends' *Come The Day*

The Blues Magoos 56
New York's sharp garage/psych legends' prime years and their legacy re-assessed

"'(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet' was a group effort where we each created something from jamming it in the basement of the infamous Albert Hotel, which allowed us to rehearse in their roach-infested basement"

welcome

Soho Radio

Listen to our monthly radio show The *Shindig!* Broadcast at sohoradiolondon.com or bit.ly/3HFmcMa

THE NIGHT OWL
FINSBURY PARK

Come to our Happening night the first Friday of every month 2000-0200 with a fab live band and top deejays spinning psychedelic sounds and beyond – bit.ly/3FlQssN

You can subscribe to *Shindig!* by snapping the QR code on your mobile or tablet, or by following the instructions on page nine. Each new subscriber receives a FREE CD and is automatically entered into a monthly draw. Subscribers have access to our full online digital archive.

Howdy Shindiggers,

Winter approaches, and the world is barely spinning on its axis. Dark days. But let's not get into that here. *Shindig!* is your refuge from the daily reality of the news, and we hope that within our pages you can at least while away a few hours free of worry. Although we're not that important in the grand scheme of things, if we can provide the faintest ray of light, our work is done.

In this issue, we come in with a themed piece surrounding the Los Angeles freak scene of the late '60s. New York's garage/psych urchins The Blues Magoos gain a historical overview, and we tell the frustrating tale of the fantastic Brummy prog rockers Locomotive. Also, there's the forgotten story of talented folkie Dave Evans, an interview with serious music nut Bob Stanley, and a whole lot more, including news of a luxurious Donovan reissue, new glam kid Billy Tibbals, The Who, Nicky Hopkins, Clydie King, and Barrence Whitfield & The Savages. That's certainly enough to get your eyes and mind well and truly stuck into.

The superb Vanity Mirror, who were truly impressive when they played our club night, offer up a prize bundle for our subscribers. You really must check them out if you are yet to do so. Following on from last issue's Coral selection, it's further evidence of our continued support for the best new music. If you are yet to subscribe, what are you waiting for? Next month, to celebrate the end of the year, we will be running a couple of competitions, centred around a mega prize draw. Sign your name on the dotted line post haste, in order not to miss.

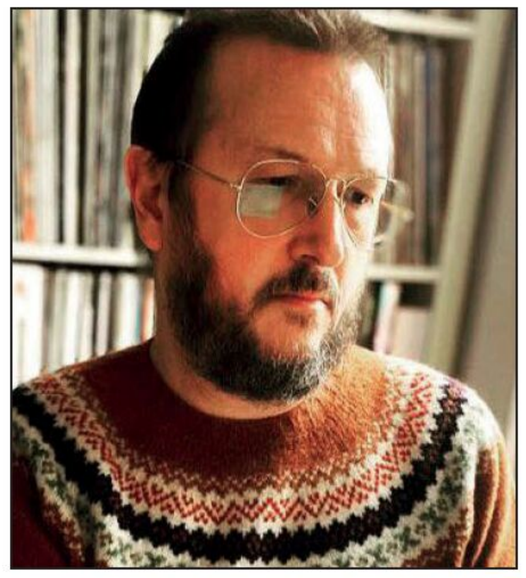
Don't forget to tune into the radio show, check out our Qobuz playlists (a good enough reason to subscribe to the platform), and try your best to make one of our Happening nights when in London. We endeavour to give you the full experience.

Kind and positive thoughts. We couldn't do it without you.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills,
Editor-In-Chief

Shindig! recommend using the hi-fi gear of their media partners and sponsors. Left to right: Pro-Ject X2 turntable (bit.ly/3FzsvhV), Cambridge Audio EVO 150 (bit.ly/3qEUusx), EVO CD (bit.ly/46216mz), and JBL L82s (bit.ly/3X7m3XA). This is a supreme hassle-free system for vinyl, CD, high-res streaming. We will be working very closely with Cambridge Audio moving forward, so watch this space. We use Chord cables (bit.ly/3sbhbp7)

Pro-Ject AUDIO SYSTEMS · CAMBRIDGE AUDIO · JBL · CHORD COMPANY



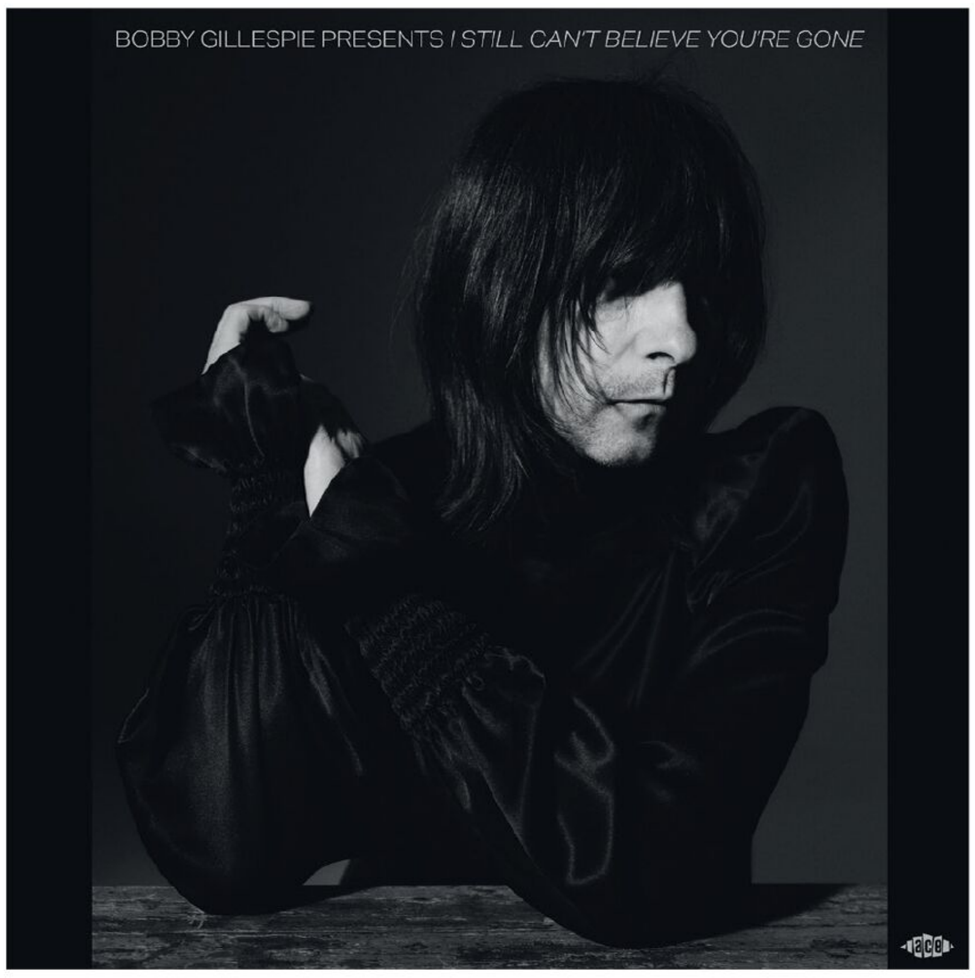
NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 7TH DECEMBER

qobuz

We're very happy to be media partners with Qobuz, who offer the best sounding curated music catalogue for both streaming and download. Each month you can hear our new issue playlist alongside an exclusive deep cut genre-based mix of obscurities and classics compiled by us. Sign up for a free trial today at Qobuz.com

We only have *three* copies left of our Godley & Creme limited edition LP. Head to silverbackpublishing.rocks/product/godley-cremes-lost-60s-recordings-exclusive-vinyl-offer/ to buy. First come, first served.

New releases: November 2023



Bobby Gillespie Presents I Still Can't Believe You're Gone
CDCHD 1605
XXQLP2 098 2LP
In Bobby's own words: 'These songs are soul savers to soothe frayed and battered nerves and to ease and settle the heart. I would like to share this wonderful music that has given me strength, joy and inspiration over the years with you the listener. We all need respite from time to time - the music on this compilation is soul food of the highest order - I hope you enjoy it.'

Candi Staton
I'm Just A Prisoner
CDKENM 516

Candi Staton
Stand By Your Man
CDKENM 517HIQLP 122 (LP)

These new CD editions of Candi's first two Fame albums feature Japanese Style Mini-LP packages with oversized rigid card sleeves and coloured inners. Both feature interviews with Candi about this magical stage of her career as well as photos from the period.

EUCLID
Heavy Equipment
HIQLP 118 (LP)
This super rare heavy rock album is one of the true surprises on the Flying Dutchman label. Much bootlegged over the years, this first official reissue is a must-have for rock fans everywhere.

Candi Staton
Stand By Your Man
HIQLP 127
"Stand By Your Man" is one of the cornerstones of southern soul. Ace are delighted to put it out again on 180gm vinyl with liner notes penned by our captive scribe Ian Shirley.

The Huck Daniels Co
Foolish Man (Part 1)
C/W Foolish Man (Part 2)
BGPS 072 (7")
Guitarist Daniels was a long-time mainstay of the B.B. King band. The A-side of his single for Kent is a driving James Brown-style funk dancer, whilst its flip features the organ playing of Earl Foster.

Billy Garner
I got some (part 1)
c/w I got some (part 2)
BGPS 070 (7")
Originally issued in 1971, 'I Got Some' is the most down and dirty of Billy Garner's singles for Dave Hamilton New Day label. This repro of the original single, sees our first 7-inch issue of 'Part 2'.

Fatback Brother Bill Curtis / Johnny King & The Fatback Band
Dance Girl
C/W Keep On Brother Keep On
BGPS 069 (7")
Before the soul and disco hits, Bill Curtis' Fatback Band were one of the tightest funk groups in the world. 'Dance Girl' is a New York block party classic, the flip is also a sought-after collectable.

Chester Randle's Soul Senders
Soul Brother's Testify (Part 1)
C/W Soul Brother's Testify (Part 2)
BGPS 071 (7")
One of the mainstays of the late 90s/ early 2000s Deep Funk movement 'Soul Brother's Testify' is a fiery mix of funk beats and psychedelic guitar. This reissue is a faithful repro reissue of the original and sought after 1967 45.

Leon Thomas / Louis Armstrong & Leon Thomas
The Creator Has A Master Plan (Peace) (Edit)
C/W The Creator Has A Master Plan (Peace)
BGPS 073 (7")
A wonderful opportunity to own two monuments of vocal jazz on one 7-inch single. Both sides feature the original 7-inch edits, neither of which have been previously reissued.

FROM THE VAULTS:

Bobby Gillespie Presents Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down
HIQLP2 040/ CDCHD 1453
An exercise in mood and atmosphere compiled for us by the Primal Scream frontman. Available on CD and 180g clear vinyl 2LP gatefold set with bonus track.

thoughts&words

shindig-magazine.com
jon@shindig-magazine.com
facebook.com/Shindig.Magazine
@shindigmagazine
shindig_magazine

DON'T MESS ME UP

Hi Jon,

Thanks for continuing to serve up entertaining and informative issues of *Shindig!*. Issue #144 was another corker, especially the article on the demise of The Move and the birth of ELO (and Wizzard!). I never realised how convoluted that whole process was.

Also, Thomas Walsh's thoughts in #143 about some of the sounds that influenced him, were hugely inspiring and entertaining. Any chance of getting him to do the singles reviews?

Would love to see an article on some of the artists who blazed a trail for me in the early '70s, such as Sparks, Cockney Rebel and Roxy Music.

Thanks again and regards,

John Barnett

Hi Jon,

The Move! My first trip to the UK was at the young age of 17. My "new" boyfriend (Edward Rogers) asked if I would pick up The Move album for him. So funny back then (like now) that the album sleeves were in the bins, but they had to bring you the actual album. Not a big deal, but not how it was in New York. Anyway, so started my love for The Move – who weren't known here at all and unlike some of the other little known/unknown artists like The Small Faces, The Walker Brothers – weren't given any space in our teen magazines.

Many thanks,

Melani Rogers

Convoluted isn't the word, is it? Martin did a brilliant job in 3000 words. And hey, maybe we should bring 'Roundtable' back on our Soho Radio show. Does everyone remember that on Radio 1? Thomas would be up first. Melani, it's great to hear a first-hand account of someone's introduction to Woody, Jeff and the gang. What a band! Cheap Trick were clearly listening.

ON THE BILL

Hi Jon,

I love it when you include old posters that have lists of bands/artistes that played a specific festival or venue. In *Shindig!* #142, you feature The Isle Of Wight Festival in your article on Melanie (althoughl the clipping is too small to read) and The Atlantic City Festival appears in your article on Little Richard – with Procol Harum, Graham Nash, Arthur Brown, Joe Cocker and Moody Blues (have I missed any?) representing the UK.

Interesting that Arthur Brown is on the Glastonbury poster with Melanie AND on The Atlantic City poster before BB King... and it's brilliant that he's still around and still amazing. I saw him last year and he always delivers.

Other brain cell massaging that I wish to thank you for in #142 would include the article on Claire Hamill's *Stage Door Johnnies*, mention of Pete Sinfield's *Still*, and all four of The Bees' albums... buzzing!

Thanks,

Steve Broadhurst

Yes, older festival posters are fascinating, and showed you, just like now, what a wide range of bands and artists played.

'CAUSE

Hi Jon,

Just finishing up reading issue #144. What a cracker! Great to see Rodriguez' second LP getting a shout out from Seán Casey – it's been my "go to" Rodriguez for a few years now. ''Cause' in particular is just jaw dropping. What a talent!

Cool, too, that you put Martin Ruddock's early ELO story up against Andy Morten's piece on The Wallace Collection. Now, there's a band worthy of its own feature – if they'd happened here, there'd have been no need for ELO! And of course, the Collection's bandleader Raymond Vincent later led the equally

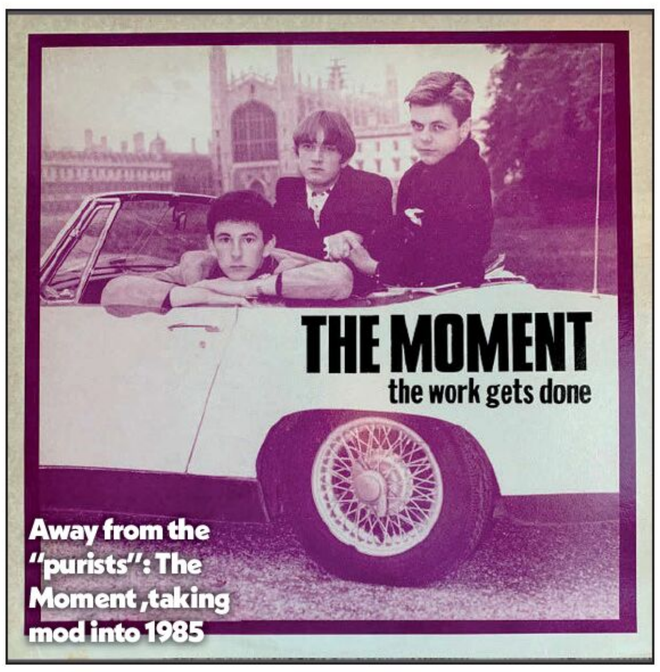
STAR LETTER

ONE TWO, THEY FLY

Hi Jon,

In relation to the new box set *Into Tomorrow*. By 1984 the mod scene had dusted itself down and got back to its feet following the hammer blow of The Jam's split. The two-page article in *Sounds* captured the mood – a buzzing underground scene where packed nights at The 100 Club felt like the beginning of something rather than the death throes of the '79 revival.

By '84 a new wave of teenage bands were breathing new life into mod, taking The Jam's blueprint in exciting new directions. The Moment were something else,



Away from the "purists": The Moment ,taking mod into 1985

Suffolk uber-mods in paisley shirts (and whistles!) who covered The Byrds 'I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better'. As were The Way Out; 19 year old Matthew Wiles' guitar pyrotechnics hinting at a love of Icicle Works as well as *Sound Affects*, on songs with socially conscious lyrics ('This Working Way')

I was selling my own fanzine, *Junction!* (name taken from the TV show in 'Absolute Beginners') in Merc just off Carnaby Street, and would go up there every Saturday to see Jimmy and restock. The place was an absolute hive of activity – there must have been at least 30 fanzines being sold in the shop with new ones appearing every week. Who needed the music press (where any rare mention of a mod band would usually be in disparaging terms) when you could get regular updates on Makin' Time, Small World and The Risk in regular issues of (market leaders) *In The Crowd*, *Extraordinary Sensations and Shadows & Reflections*?

It has to be said that the weekly Phoenix List also played a part in driving the scene on. It was gossipy and opinionated, for sure, but it arrived on the doormat each week as regular as clockwork, and felt like an essential part of "the scene" before a fixation with The Gents and ugly rumours about Mark Johnson started to emerge.

I'd argue that the mod scene was even better in '85. Free from the strait (mohair) jacket of purist "Smart Mod Dress Only" events, both Makin' Time and The Moment were moving beyond the mod scene, packing out gigs and releasing classic debut albums in *Rhythm And Soul* and *The Work Gets Done*. The first Countdown compilation (released in '85) was also a progression – the likes of The Combine (formerly Small World) moving into new sonic territory.

In retrospect the "Mod Aid" show at The Boston Arms (on the day of Live Aid in July '85) felt like a final show of teenage strength – by '86 it was all over. But hey, by then Boys Wonder had turned up!

Yours,

Paul Moody (Studio 68)

Thanks Paul. It's nice to see another side to the mod scene, more akin to the acts featured on the mentioned Into Tomorrow *box set. Last issue's feature focused solely on the "purist" element. I was a confused teenaged mod that embraced both camps and remember it all really well. That box was a real trip down memory lane. Both Andy and I are on it with our own bands (The Nuthins, The Nerve and Bronco Bullfrog), as are you. A copy of French Boutik's new album,* Ce je ne sais quoi, *is on the way. They're a band carrying the mod flame well and truly into the 21st Century.*

Robert Sekula (centre) and his 14 Iced Bears

brilliant Esperanto (also a worthy feature). What else? Great interview with Tony Visconti, nice piece on The Incredible String Band... I could go on but there's too much reading to do. Keep on keepin' on!

Gareth Jones

Thanks Gareth, and your contributions are always well worth a read too.

LOVE ON A SUGAR MOUNTAIN

Hi Jon,

While skimming through my record collection I often choose to play every sixth record from a random starting point, this way it's a mystery tour as I don't categorise them.

Today I played a reissue of the 14 Iced bears' Wonder album on Optic Nerve recordings. It's a reissue as I, like many other misguided fools, sold almost all of my records back in the early '90s. It got me wondering whether *Shindig!*, in its brilliance, had ever run an article on the Bears? They were a band who appeared to put enthusiasm ahead of actual ability, and I kinda like that.

Robert Sekula is still playing solo gigs. I've never managed to ever get to see them/him play live, and thus I console myself with listening to their albums. They seem like a band who would have an interesting story.

May I commend you on a great write up on Ronnie Bird (issue #143). I'd never heard of him before. Informative as always.

Keep up the good work!

Steve Porter

Yes, Robert is a pal. And they'd be ideal to cover. Who's up for it?

MUSIC WRITING

Hi Jon,

Following Lee's letter about music journalism in issue #144, there's a flourishing community of music writers on substack.com. Writers there have enthusiasm, skill, knowledge of music (some, like myself, have been into music for over 50 years) and are very welcoming. Best of all, posts reach readers, and there's an opportunity to gain paid subscribers too (and not just in theory!)

I collaborated with a writer there on an article about The Move and Roy Wood just a few weeks ago, so it was great to see your cover and piece.

I've deliberately not named anyone as this letter isn't intended to be promotional, but a search on the platform will bring many stimulating posts and playlists.

All the best,

Ian Sharp

Thanks Ian. Music journalism lives and may even see a rebirth if the youth continue to thrive on passion and knowledge

THE WELSH CONNECTION

Hi Jon,

First up let me thank you for introducing me to so much great music both old and new that I'd never have come across elsewhere. The first thing I do when *Shindig!* arrives is to scour the record reviews, starting with Camilla Aisa's always rewarding review of the latest online releases, compiling a monthly playlist from the music reviewed.

A couple of ideas for future features. As a young teenager I adopted Man as "my" band. Micky Jones (or was it Deke Leonard?) commenting in the *NME* that "We may not be the best band in the world, but we sure smoke the most dope" struck an impressionable 13-year-old as being seriously cool. So many of Man's many members over the years (including Micky and Deke) are sadly no longer with us but I'd love to see a retrospective of the band, maybe focusing on the transition from the harmony-pop of The Bystanders to the West Coast influenced psych-prog-improvisational sound of Man.

And while on a Welsh trip how about looking at the phenomenal amount of talent emerging from the country in recent years, much of which readily fits in with *Shindig!*'s wide oeuvre. I'm thinking Melin Melyn, Bug Club, Rogue Jones, Adwaith, Sister Wives, H. Hawkline, Half Happy, Papur Wal Diolch yn fawr,

Davey White

Good call. We have only ever done micro pieces on Man. Something bigger would surely be welcomed by many. And yes, the new Welsh acts have all been covered in our pages. Great stuff.

SHINDIG!

Editor-in-Chief:
Jon 'Mojo' Mills
jon@shindig-magazine.com
64 North View Road, London N8 7LL

Reviews Editor:
Andy Morten
andy@shindig-magazine.com

Live Reviews Editor:
Kate Hodges
kate@shindig-magazine.com

Contributing Editor:
Thomas Patterson
thomas@shindig-magazine.com

Assistant Editor:
Paul Osborne
paul@shindig-magazine.com

Editorial Assistance:
Phil Suggitt
phil@shindig-magazine.com
Fiona McQuarrie
Martin Ruddock

Contributors:
Camilla Aisa, Matt Allwright, Grahame Bent, Michael Björn, Harold Bronson, Christopher Budd, Tess Carges, Seán Casey, Hugh Dellar, Stuart Draper, Duncan Fletcher, Mike Fornatale, Peter Gallagher, Ben Graham, Brian Greene, Sarah Gregory, Chris Groom, Lenny Helsing, Henry Hutton, Johnnie Johnstone, Murdo Mathewson, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Morten Thomas Patterson, Jeff Penczak, Dom Picksley, Paul Ritchie, Marco Rossi, Martin Ruddock, Vic Templar, Chris Twomey, Clive Webb

Publisher:
Tom Saunders, Silverback Publishing
tom@silverbackpublishing.rocks
14 Victoria Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4RT
Tel: 07841 412199

Director: Andy Crispin

Commercial Manager:
Alan Thomas
alan@shindig-magazine.com
Tel: 07830 168076

Subscriptions:
subs@silverbackpublishing.rocks
Tel: 07841 412199

Design: Martin Cook, Andy Morten
Printed by: Warners Group

SILVERBACK PUBLISHING

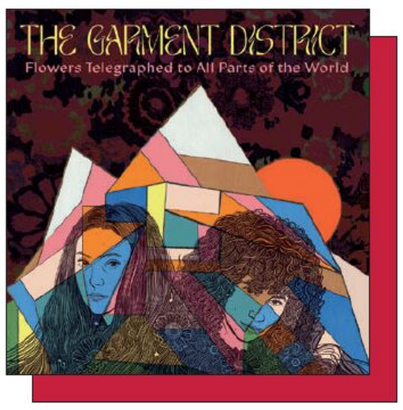
If you have trouble finding *Shindig!* magazine in the UK please contact Susan Stone, Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1 A 9PT on +44 (0) 207 429 4073, email: *susan.stone@seymour.co.uk*

While every effort is made in compiling *Shindig!* magazine the publishers cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Readers are advised to pay by credit card when ordering goods off the page as they are regulated under Consumer Act 1974, unlike debit or charge cards, which are not. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any storage or retrieval system, without the consent of the publisher. Registered at Stationers Hall Copyright. Direct Input by Silverback Publishing Ltd.

shindiggin'

What's HOT on the Shindig! turntable

The brand new releases, compilation standouts, old album tracks and dusty 45s rockin' our world this month



THE GARMENT DISTRICT
Left On Coast

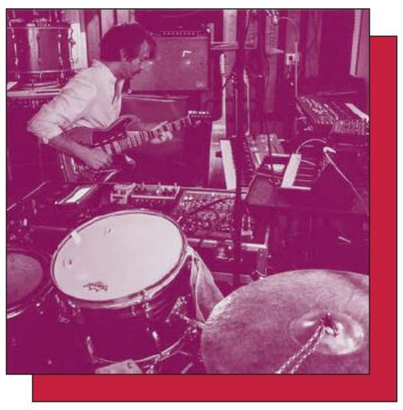
This side of hazy sun-baked psychedelia from the prolific Pittsburgh-based multi-talented multi-instrumentalist Jennifer Baron heralds the return of her project The Garment District and checks off our whole wish list for an end-of-summer exultation: a garagey rhythm section, chiming guitars, trilling transistor organ and Lucy Blehar's hypnotic, reverb-washed vocals. Check out the dreamily kaleidoscopic video and count the days till the sun comes back.

Available on: Flowers Telegraphed To All Parts Of The World (HAPPY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME LP)

ROY AYERS UBIQUITY
Running Away

There's something quintessentially balmy about vibist Ayers' music and nowhere is this more evident than on hit record 'Running Away'. First appearing on his 1977 group album *Lifeline*, 'Running Away' kicks off with an infectious doo-bee-doo vocal that swiftly ripens into sonorous multi-layered vocal interplay featuring Dee Dee Bridgewater. Flouting the traditional verse-chorus-verse – this is an incessant, hypnotic groove that persists for the entirety of the track. A stunning seven-minute 12-inch version also appeared in '77. Marvellous.

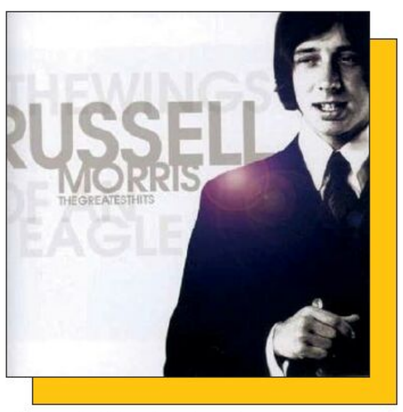
Available On: Lifeline (POLYDOR LP)



DANIEL ÖGREN
Hjälmarsfjorden

Electronica, desert-rock, frosty Scandinavian songsmithery, and even Afrobeat and South American folk – an LP that proudly displays this many influences needs a centrepiece, and this is it. 'Hjälmarsfjorden''s all too brief three-and-three-quarter minutes feature Ögren multi-tasking on guitars, bass, piano, synths and clavinet with Dina Ögon bandmates Anna Ahnlund and Christopher Cantillo (who also wields the sticks for Sven Wunder) bringing the percussion. It's undoubtedly rawer than Ögren's work in Dina Ögon, but as tight and addictive a slice of psychedelic funk as you could wish for.

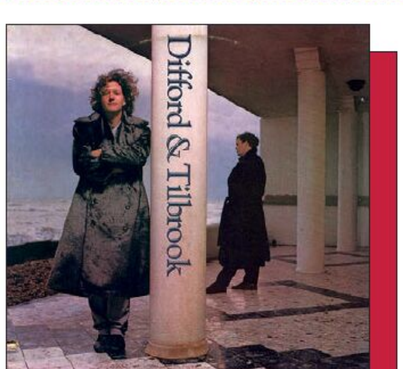
Available on: Fastingen-92 (MR BONGO LP)



RUSSELL MORRIS
The Real Thing (Parts I & II)

Seeing footage of the 74-year-old Morris expertly delivering his 1969 psych-rock opus with a full orchestra in June of this year reminded us of both the song and the singer's potency. Written by pop star/songwriter Johnny Young and produced by Ian 'Molly' Meldrum – the Aussi dreamtime of the day – 'The Real Thing (Parts I & II)' was released as former Somebody's Image singer Morris's first solo single in March '69. The six-plus-minute running time, giddy phasing, instrumental second half, extract of a Hitler Youth choir and closing atomic explosion couldn't stop it from rocketing to #1 and becoming an Australia anthem.

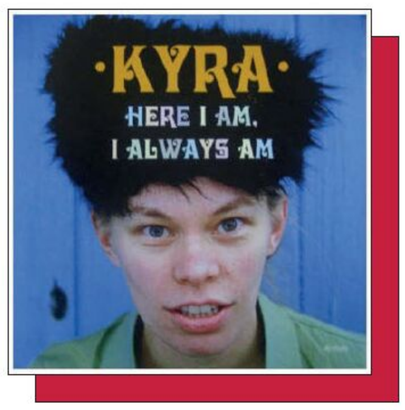
Available on: The Greatest Hits (EMI CD)



DIFFORD & TILBROOK
Love's Crashing Waves

This slice of effervescent none-more-80s pop is from the eponymous 1984 album from Chris Difford and Glenn Tilbrook, co-produced by Tony Visconti and recorded after Squeeze broke up for a short period following '82's *Sweets From A Stranger*. While you can take the boys out of Squeeze, you can't take the Squeeze out of the boys, and 'Waves' could have come from any of the classic albums – or at the very least, the soundtrack for an English romcom circa '85. Even the video, which attempts to give the duo a bit of beachside glamour, looks like a windy weekend in Margate; and we wouldn't have it any other way.

Available on: Difford & Tilbrook (A&M LP)



KYRA
Love In A Void

The new deluxe reissue of Kyra's 1991 Vinyl Japan album adds a swathe of extra cuts to the already pleasurable Captain Beefheart-derived title track and orgasmic Electric Eels and Buzzcocks borrowings. But it's the screaming, maniacal re-telling of this Siouxsie & The Banshees 1977 howler (first issued as a Kyra Rubella & The Shanks single in '95) that wins the vote of recommendation. Kyra de Coninck's wild and intense vocal performance alongside the Shanks' supercharged beat-punk brutality makes for a perfect marriage.

Available on: Here I Am, I Always Am (DAMAGED GOODS LP)

THE WILL-O-BEES
It's Not Easy

Sandy Posey's recording of this song appeared on Grapefruit's recent *Born A Woman* compilation, prompting a search for other versions. The Will-O-Bees' 1967 take on the Mann/Weil classic is a sunshine-pop marvel, with production and arrangement perfect for the era's AM radios. The group were a folk-rock trio from New York, active between '66 and '69. Their short time together yielded a total of six singles, this one reaching the heady heights of #95 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 in early '68. It's aged well. Listening now you feel it's just an advert or movie placement away from charting higher.

Available on: DATE 45

THE TREASURES OF MEXICO
Monday Morning

Ah, Monday! Whether spent recovering from weekend hangovers or preparing for another week of drudgery, no other day seems to get as bad a rap as Monday. Artists as diverse as The Mamas & The Papas, Fleetwood Mac, Boomtown Rats and The Jam have rued its existence, but the Treasures ease the pain with this absolute banger of a tune – jingle-jangle pop heaven disguising what seems to be a tale of a(nother) failed relationship. Toss in a storming guitar solo and a sympathetic vocal wrapped around a toe-tapping melody and suddenly Mondays don't seem so miserable after all.

Available on: Burn The Jets (SPINOUT NUGGETS LP)

DONNY HATHAWAY
Tryin' Times

It's a sobering thought that the issues raised on this 1970 album cut are still providing fodder for news outlets over five decades later. Riots, polarised opinion, the fight for equality, and calls for love and respect – all are mentioned on this track co-written by Hathaway and Leroy Hutson. On the plus side, the music still sounds great. Hathaway's friend and sometime singing partner Roberta Flack released a slower version a year previously, an equally impressive take on the track. Hathaway opts for a faster tempo, with gospel piano flourishes and vocal improvisation on the intro.

Available on: Everything Is Everything (ATCO LP)

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
Killin' Floor

The Experience positively tear into their white hot hi-jacking of Howlin' Wolf's 'Killing Floor' and in the process effectively torch The Hollywood Bowl as Hendrix had literally done a matter of weeks earlier at Monterey when the trio made their incandescent US live debut. Taking off at a furious tempo, this high-speed homage to one of the blues giants picks up its fearsome momentum from Hendrix's gravity-defying guitar and Mitch Mitchell's miraculous speed freak finesse behind the kit. Heard here The Experience sound like they're flying high on supercharged rocket fuel.

Available on: Hollywood Bowl August 18 1967 (EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/LEGACY LP)

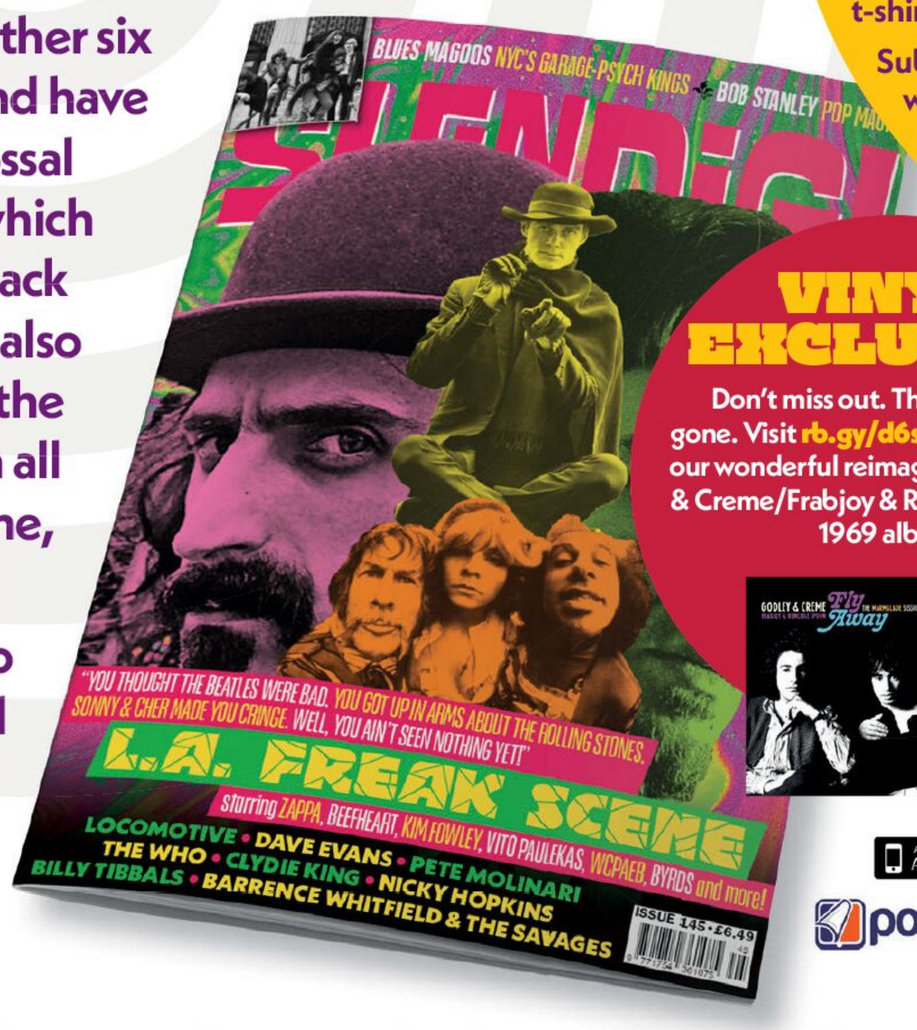
Visit shindig-magazine.com to check out Shindiggin' playlists, mixes and much more

SHINDIG! SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE!

Subscription deals, from only £18.00!

Subscribe today for either six months or one year and have free access to our colossal **Basement Archive**, which not only contains all back issues and books, but also the latest issue. Read the full *Shindig!* library on all of your devices anytime, anywhere, anyhow.

All subscribers are also automatically entered into the **Subscriber Draw**. See the box on the right for this month's draw.



Subscribers' PRIZE DRAW

This issue, one lucky subscriber will win a bundle of goodies by the bands of the highly talented songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Brent Randall and fab drummer Johnny Toomey. Vanity Mirror played a blinder at our London club night last month. The winner will receive Vanity Mirror's ***PUFF*** and The Electric Looking Glass's ***Somewhere Flower's Grow*** LPs, a comp tape, band t-shirt and pins.

Subscribe today to be in with a chance of winning – the winner's size will be requested.

*All print subscribers are automatically entered

VINYL EXCLUSIVE

Don't miss out. They're almost gone. Visit **rb.gy/d6sl6w** now to buy our wonderful reimagining of Godley & Creme/Frabjoy & Runcible Spoon's 1969 album

Available on the App Store

Available on Google play

pocketmags.com

Print edition SUBSCRIBE TODAY

and receive another of Alec Palao's highly-regarded garage comps, ***Don't Be Bad: '60s Punk Recorded In Texas***, featuring The Driving Wheels, The Passions, The Argyles and the wild music of numerous other snot-nosed teens.

* Year /two-year subs only. Whilst stocks last.

ORDER YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW

Call: 07841 412199 Visit: www.silverbackpublishing.rocks/latest-issue/ E-mail: subs@silverbackpublishing.rocks
or return the form below to: Shindig! Subscriptions, 14 Victoria Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 4RT

UNITED KINGDOM:

Three months of *Shindig!*	£18.00 ☐
Six months of *Shindig!*	£33.00 ☐
12 months of *Shindig!*	£59.00 ☐
24 months of *Shindig!*	£110.00 ☐

INTERNATIONAL EUROPE:

Three months of *Shindig!*	£29.00 ☐
Six months of *Shindig!*	£49.00 ☐
12 months of *Shindig!*	£91.00 ☐
24 months of *Shindig!*	£175.00 ☐

REST OF THE WORLD:

Three months of *Shindig!*	£34.00 ☐
Six months of *Shindig!*	£64.00 ☐
12 months of *Shindig!*	£120.00 ☐
24 months of *Shindig!*	£220.00 ☐

YOUR DETAILS:

TITLE INITIALS

SURNAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE COUNTRY

DAYTIME TEL. NO.

E-MAIL

PAYMENT METHOD:

Cheque (payable to Silverback Publishing Ltd)

VISA/MASTERCARD/SWITCH CARD NO.

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

START DATE EXPIRY DATE

SWITCH ISSUE NUMBER

THE LAST THREE NUMBERS FROM THE SIGNATURE STRIP ON THE BACK OF YOUR CARD ☐☐☐

DATE

The information supplied on the form will be retained by Silverback Publishing Ltd on a database. The information may also be used for marketing purposes and you could be contacted by letter, telephone or e-mail with details of products or services which we believe may be of interest to you. You will only receive such contact from carefully selected companies, approved by the team at Silverback.

IF YOU DON'T WANT THIS STUFF PLEASE TICK THIS BOX ☐ The mag will be delivered to your door and you should get it before it arrives in the shops. Overseas subscriptions are sent by airmail.

BACK ISSUES, BOOKS, LPS, MERCH & TEES

Every back issue and book, as well as T-shirts, a lovely binder to house your collection, vinyl and more. Buy or sub at **silverbackpublishing.rocks/back-issues/silverbackpublishing.rocks/back-issues** and **silverbackpublishing.rocks/product-category/merchandise-books/** See site for prices or scan the QR code

SCAN ME

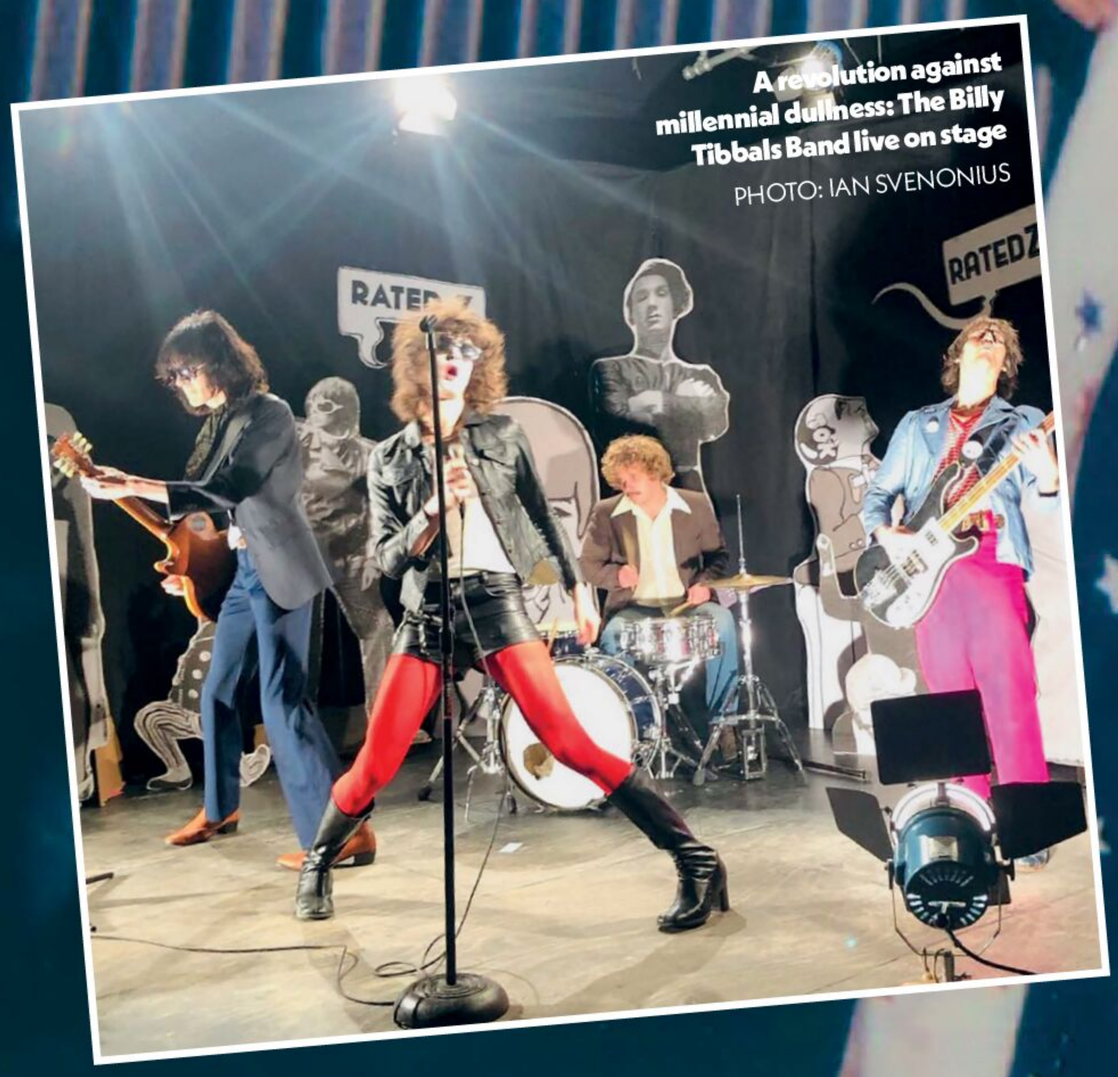
DIGITAL EDITION DOWNLOAD

Subscribe digitally for one year* from **£29.99** Latest issue and back issues just **£3.99**. See **pocketmags.com/shindig-magazine** for more info

it's a happening thing

A one man crusade: Billy Tibbals conjures up a rock 'n' roll spell

PHOTO: ELLIOT WEAVER



A revolution against millennial dullness: The Billy Tibbals Band live on stage

PHOTO: IAN SVENONIUS

Dream Away

Yet another rising star from The City Of Angels, **BILLY TIBBALS** talks North London, magic tricks, elder statesmen and the power of rock 'n' roll with **JON 'MOJO' MILLS**

There's definitely something in the air at present. We've touched upon it in these pages over the past 10 years, sensing a bit of a youthquake, after witnessing Foxygen a number of years back, and shortly after falling for their successors The Lemon Twigs. And it's been the latter, over their maturation, who have perhaps inspired and befriended a coterie of likeminded pals across the USA. And it's spreading. Whilst the term "revival" has become lazy and somewhat derivative, The Lemon Twigs, Uni Boys, Josephine Network, Tchotchke, and numerous others, including the brilliant Billy Tibbals Band, are all tapping into the same well, free of irony or plagiarism, yet utterly getting the sensibility of a certain period in the rock 'n' roll cannon.

"I'm so glad that there are other bands out there making the kind of music I like," claims the 20-something Tibbals. "The mentioned acts are some of the best groups around. I would just describe it as 'real rock 'n' roll music'. There are rock n roll cosplayers, and there's the real thing! I don't feel too confined by any particular sub-genres or anything. I'm still developing my own particular sound and figuring out exactly what I wanna do, but that's always gonna change. I want to keep experimenting! With Uni Boys, the Twigs, Tchotchke, there are a whole bunch of influences, but they sound original and new. It's not a copycat revival, it's a continuation. Rock 'n' roll music is alive! Hopefully more people start catching on soon, because the world needs it right now."

Looking like a head on crash between Brett Smiley and Russel Mael, topped off with a NYC street punk credibility, Tibbals music taps into the teen glam and pop of the early '70s, powerpop and rock, and early '80s new-wave, on occasion sounding not unlike early Supergrass.

"I suppose a lot of the music that I was listening to as a small child is still really influencing everything I do," he explains. "It's that formative stuff that's just wired into your psyche. There're even times where I'll realise that I've taken a bit of a melody from a kids' TV show that I used to watch. I'm very inspired by living in Los Angeles. Hollywood is still the same as it's always been. The place where the glitz and glamour meets the dark and destitute.

"Rock 'n' roll music is alive! Hopefully more people start catching on soon because the world needs it right now"

Hollywood is a state of mind!"

As you can tell, the enigmatic Tibbals is drawn to the bright lights of showbiz. "I spent the first 11 years of my life in North London," he says. Listening to his music you can tell, as he plays heavily with Dickensian intonation and estuary vowels. "I made my way back in those days performing at children's birthday parties. Magic tricks, puppet shows, juggling and that sort of thing. I've always loved putting on a show. I made a bit of pocket money doing those parties too. When I wasn't entertaining the Hornsey youth, I was listening to my dad's CD collection and watching way too much TV. I ended up in LA when my dad got a job making a show about a Prince Harry lookalike trying to find a girlfriend. That was 2014. My dad definitely turned me onto a lot of the music that continues to influence what I'm writing now."

Tibbals first single, 'Onwards And Upwards', appeared on Brent Rademaker's Curation Records at the tail end of 2022. He had been introduced to the label boss via The Uni Boys' Rezza, who himself recorded and played on the single, which was cut on an old 8-track. It's one of the most instant debuts *Shindig!* has heard in a long-time, and if released here in 1981, it could certainly have been beamed to thousands of kids on a regional British TV show, like *Runaround*, *Get It Together*, *The Saturday Banana,* or maybe even *Cheggers Plays Pop* on the Beeb. Assuming the moniker to be a fake play on the Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco scene, it's not the case. "William Tibbals is, in fact, my real, actual name," the singer laughs. "For a while, when I was an insecure little kid, I thought it was really silly. I absolutely hated it. I went by Will for a bit, and even considered swapping out Tibbals for something else. Fortunately, I got over that phase pretty quickly."

It was when at high school that Tibbals hooked up with some older kids, hit Amoeba and got into rock 'n' roll seriously. See his YouTube playlist for proof. And through Rademaker, he also got chatting with Chris Robinson, which resulted in the six track *Stay Teenage* EP being released on Silver Arrow Records. "When I was writing those songs, I was at that point of leaving behind my teenage years and looking back at the experiences and friendships I had in high school," he says. "It's thematically very different to most of the songs on my forthcoming EP, *Nightlife Stories*."

This will be released early next year to coincide with a tour, and we're really hoping we can bring The Billy Tibbals Band to London to play in the vicinity of his childhood home. Recorded at Osees' John Dwyer's and Eric Bauer's Discount studios, we've been fortunate enough to have had a listen to a rough version of the mixes, and it's great. Once again, music fanatic Chris Robinson brought his expertise as a producer to the project. "We had so much fun recording this new record, and I hope that comes through," he smiles proudly. "Chris and I were really on the same page, as far as what we wanted to do differently from *Stay Teenage,* and that made everything go very smoothly. It's definitely a wilder record!"

Tibbals offers us a taster of what to expect. "It starts off with a track called 'Burn Out'. It's a cautionary tale of a jaded rock star. It's sort of expressing my fears of falling into some of the less appealing clichés of the genre. That's not gonna happen though! The second track 'The World Revolves' was inspired by one of my favourite songs, 'Is That All There Is' by Peggy Lee. It's a party anthem! The EP closes out with a song that might be the best I have ever written, called 'Dream Away'. I think it captures pretty much exactly how I feel about the strange modern world we live in today. Hopefully some people relate to it."

Although this opening spread usually features bands that have been around a while, when a pretty much unknown act as good as this comes along, we offer them prime place. "It really means so much to me that Chris and B-Rad believe in me and have supported and helped me so much with my music career," closes this rising star. "I'm incredibly lucky!"

Ultimate Pleasure is out in early 2024 on Silver Arrow

Ragged Glory

As Boston's explosive R&B/garage journeymen **BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES** return with their first album in five years, founder members Barrence Whitfield, Peter Greenberg and Phil Lenker guide us through some of the sounds that influenced its creation

BEAU DOLLAR

I'm Ready, I'm Ready (I Got Me Some Soul)

(A-side, King, May 1969)

HANK BALLARD & THE MIDNIGHTERS (WITH ORCHESTRA)

I'm Young

(B-side, King, April 1962)

Two covers on *Glory,* emerged out of Sid Nathan's iconic King Records of Cincinnati. 'I'm Ready! I'm Ready,' written by James Brown and Bud Hogood and recorded by Beau Dollar, and 'I'm Young' by Hank Ballard, first recorded with his Midnighters in 1962. Peter Greenberg, our guitarist, grew up in Cincy, aka The Queen Of The West, where our last four LPs were recorded. We recorded *Glory* for FOLC Records out of Spain, and Mike Mariconda engineered, produced, and recorded us in Valencia's Enfante Estudio. Beau Dollar was an interesting character. Beau was a white drummer who played with James Brown in The Dapps and with Lonnie Mack. He sang on 'I'm Ready! I'm Ready,' with James producing. Hank Ballard & The Midnighters were a well-known band, but 'I'm Young' spoke to us. And with that sentence, you can see how we like to unearth the not-so-well-known gems hidden in the crates and bins.

HAROLD BURRAGE

Bad Situation

(From *The One-Derful Collection: M-Pac! Records*, Secret Stash LP, 2015)

Another label we love is the One-derful/ Marvlus/M-Pac soul conglomerate, one of the few Black-owned labels in Chicago. They ran strong during the '60s, releasing a catalogue of great music. We recorded 'You Told A Lie' by Johnny Styles on *Savage Kings* a while back. The track we do on *Glory*, 'Bad Situation', was only recorded as a demo by Harold Burrage and never released. Peter found it a few years back when it sneaked out on a compilation. Harold's version was a demo, pretty forgettable as it sounds like shit; the performance was abysmal, but the singing was fine. With the right kick-of-the-ass sound, we knew Barrence could make it his own thing. We're single-orientated guys; give us a stack of 45s any day. Peter doesn't even look at the albums when we hit the record stores on our tours. We always find a rare B-side that no one's ever heard or ignored, or you find a record that some label released but tanked in sales or wasn't radio-friendly, but it's a good song; at least to us, it's a good song.

DON AND DEWEY

Justine

(A-side, Specialty, May 1958)

Don Harris and Dewey Terry grew up in Pasadena and worked all over LA in a mess of small studios during the '50s and '60s. They both played guitar and piano and sang, while Don had played the violin since he was a kid. If you're a Zappa fan, that's Don, as Don 'Sugarcane' Harris, playing electric violin on 'Willie The Pimp' off *Hot Rats*. You can hear the DNA for the Savages sound right there in those early Don and Dewey 45s. 'Justine' was a modest hit for The Righteous Brothers. Bill and Bobby try, but theirs is a pale imitation. For our tribute, we wanted an original that Don and Dewey could have done but obviously didn't. 'Cape May Diamond' is not a '50s love song by any means. When we got to Spain and were rehearsing for the sessions, Barrence noticed the lyrics were missing one line. So we emailed our co-writer Moody (Michael Mooney) and he wrote back, "I knew I needed a new pituitary gland". And that was the line! We were like, "What? What does that even mean?" Only Moody could come up with something like that; you'll never get that kind of lyric in any rock 'n' roll song from anyone else. Only Barrence could sing a line like that with such meaning.

"Those '50s gospel groups cook it down to its most rockin' heartfelt basics. Nothing extra was added. Straight, no chaser. That's how it's supposed to be and what we strive for"

THE GOSPELAIRES OF DAYTON, OHIO

Camp Meeting

(Peacock LP, 1961)

'Flyin" is influenced stylistically by '50s rockabilly and Black gospel group records like those of The Gospelaires Of Dayton, Ohio, who recorded for the Houston-based Peacock Label. 'Hound Dog' by Big Mama Thornton was a hit for them in 1953, and their roster included a slew of rocking R&B artists and some jazz. However, in the early '50s they focused exclusively on gospel singles by the likes of The Gospelaires Of Dayton, Ohio. Gotta look them up with the "Of Dayton, Ohio" or else you'll be tricked out by a white gospel trio who are not The Gospelaires that inspired us. The basic blues bass lines, driving rhythm guitar, and foot-stomping percussion pulsating under soul shouter gospel vocals of those Gospelaires are also a staple of the Barrence Whitfield & The Savages sound. Those '50s gospel groups cook it down to its most rockin' heartfelt basics. Nothing extra was added. Straight, no chaser. That's how it's supposed to be and what we strive for.

R ERICSON (SIC) + BLEIBALIEN

Red Temple Prayer (Two Headed Dog)

(A-side, Mars, 1985)

'I Do My Best To Survive' is influenced by the feel of Roky Erickson's 'Red Temple Prayer (Two Headed Dog),' a 45 produced by Doug Sahm in 1975. 'Two Headed Dog' is not science-fiction. Get this: a Russian doctor, Vladimir Demikhov, succeeded in grafting an extra head on a dog in the '50s. "A pioneer in transplantology!" Roky twisted that scenario

You know my nemes! Barrence Whitfield (middle), Peter Greenberg (left) and Phil Lenker (right)

into 'Red Temple Prayer'. Its lyrics, theme and coolness kickstarted Phil into writing 'I Do My Best To Survive'. Not so much the music, which is more of the rock that the early Jefferson Airplane created, but with the '70s production techniques and sonically inspired overdubs. Both songs have psychedelic roots-rock and rock elements, and rock horror.

THE CINCINNATI SUDS

In Your Bedroom

(Dirty Water LP, 2008)

THEE SHAMS

Please Yourself

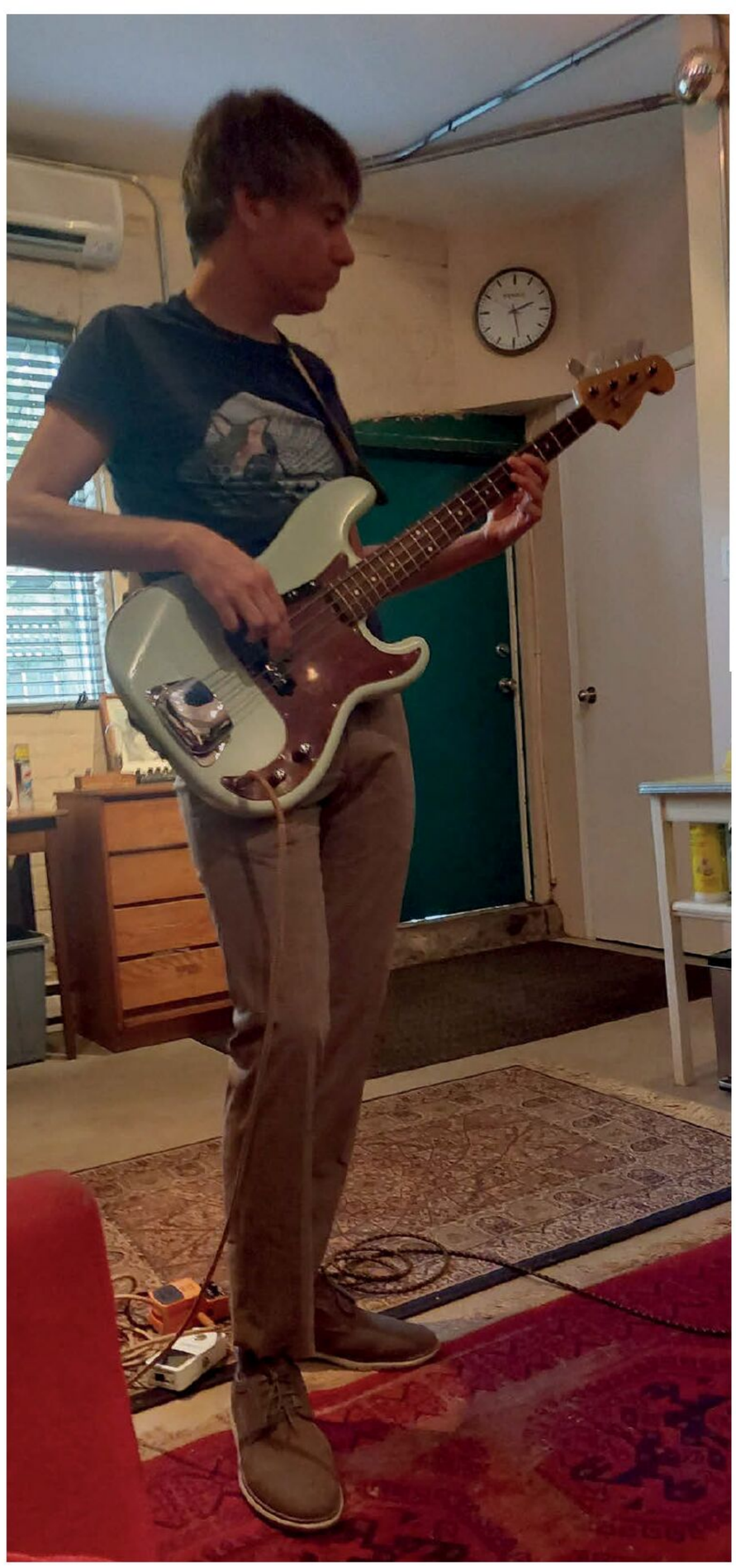
(Fat Possum LP, 2004)

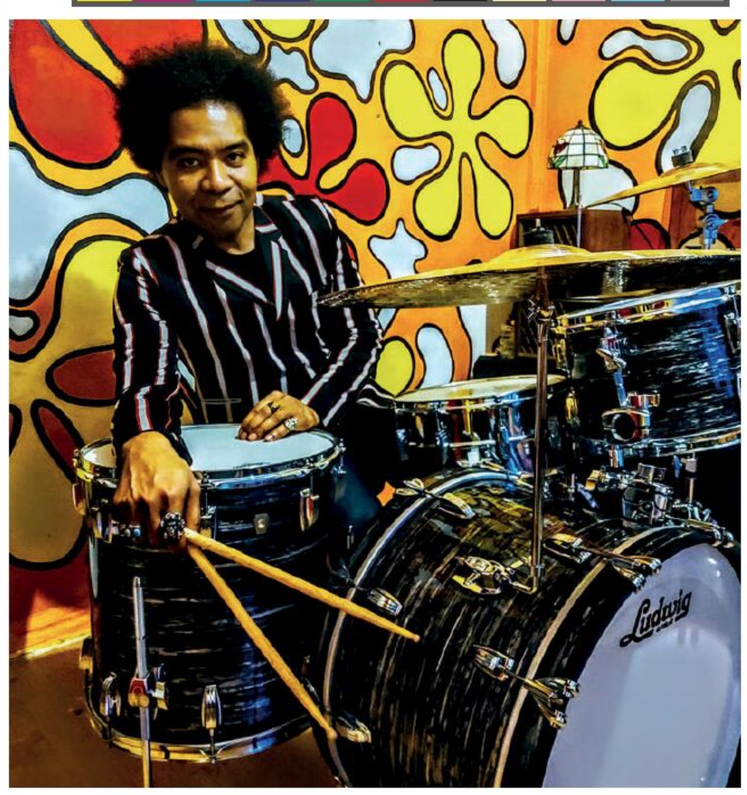
'Killing Time' was written by our drummer

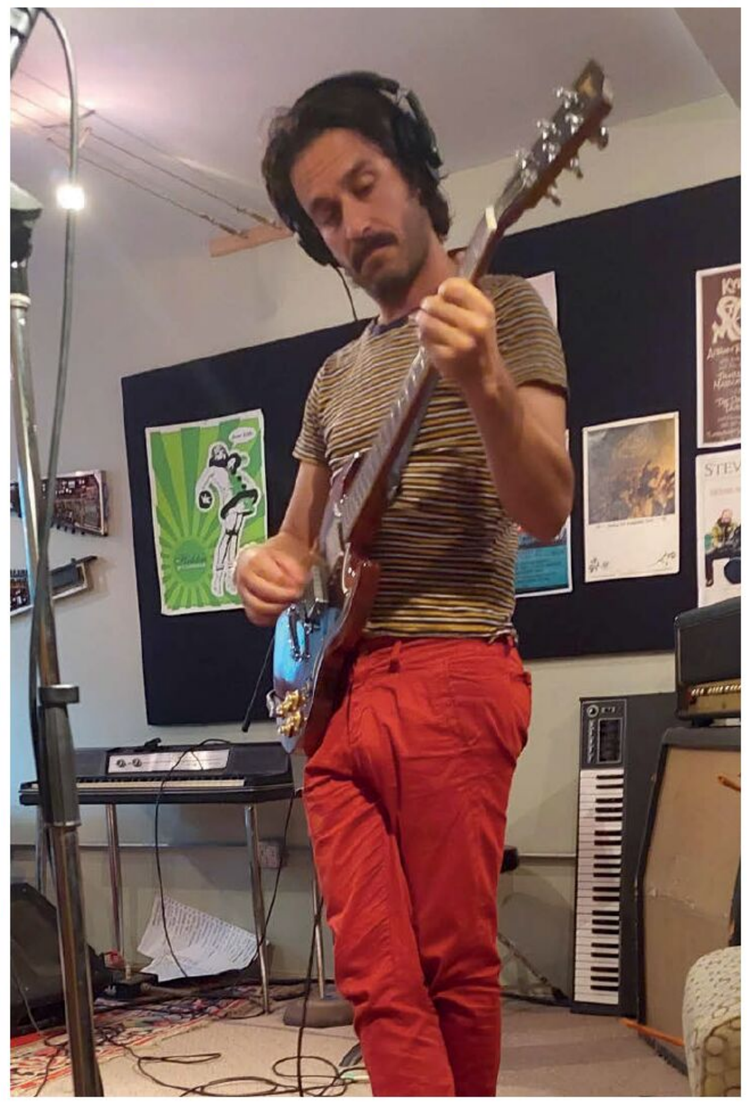
Andy Jody and his friend Adam Wesley and was originally on the album *In Your Bedroom* by The Cincinnati Suds. We knew Adam well, and he has since passed, so we wanted to include it on our new album as a tribute. Adam was also in Thee Shams, recording for Fat Possum Records, so in that mode and to honour Adam, our take is much more garage-y than most of the other tracks on the album. The lyrics deal with suicide, and the way Barrence initially wanted to approach his performance was akin to the Johnny Cash albums Cash did with Rick Rubin. Haunting, spare and holding back, yet still wrestling with the emotion of the words. But then Andy told Barrence, "On the second verse, you have to give me a *real* voice!" Andy was spot on, and it works that way. Spencer Evoy of the band MFC Chicken lays down the baritone here. Spencer lives in Barcelona now, but he's from Canada. Recording in Valencia meant we could pull him into the studio to help us achieve that garage kind of grunge, grind that beat underneath.

With thanks to David Greenberg

Glory is out now on FOLC







Thierry Bravo (this pic and top right), Christopher Norman, and David Celia "A lot of ovement in under three minutes"

Dark Reveries

NIGHTMARES IN THE AFTERNOON are crafting a debut album that demands our attention.

ANDY MORTEN eavesdrops

The last time we heard from Jim Thierry Bravo was in mid-2021 when Polite Society – the group he founded with various pals from the Toronto psych-rock scene – was about to drop its self-titled debut album. The record is a cracker – a true hidden gem that should've reached a wider audience – so it's a little surprising to hear that Jim's current project involves another band entirely. "Polite Society has actually split into two camps," he tells us. "A progressive outfit and this one – decidedly less so for the sake of the average contemporary attention span."

Enter Nightmares In The Afternoon, the group's name alone conjuring horror fever dreams. Joining drummer/guitarist Jim are "local psych brothers David Celia, Christopher Norman and James Scott. The name Nightmares In The Afternoon is indicative of the lyrical content. I hope the music and artwork will evoke the wistful nostalgia almost exclusively the domain of people born before 1982. It's for those who understand 'hauntology', or when I refer to the era of 'evil sunshine', when sunny days were tempered by a heavy melancholy and looming nuclear annihilation."

Where Polite Society mined a particular niche of Vertigo swirl-era progressive pop that traversed heavy riffs and pastoral melodicism with skill and insight, Nightmares are coming from a different angle. "A friend referred to it as a heavy, more disciplined Velvet Underground, but my bible is 'Happiness Is A Warm Gun', meaning a lot of movement in under three minutes." The three tracks *Shindig!* has heard suggest Kevin Ayers alternately leading The Soft Boys and Guided By Voices through a party scene from a cult Euro horror exploitation flick.

"It's for those who understand the era of 'evil sunshine', when sunny days were tempered by a heavy melancholy and looming nuclear annihilation"

As always, the crunchy analogue technology employed becomes one of the stars of the show. Working with producer/engineer/musician John Critchley at his Green Door Studio in Toronto, the new recordings were made using "A '70s 32-channel YAMAHA PM2000 console in tandem with RADAR, a 24-channel converter with analogue circuitry. Vox and Fender amps, Epiphones, Telecasters and SGs litter the studio. Oh, and a Ringo model Premier kit.

"Of course, Beatles-inspired ruminations," Jim signs off. The old ways remain.

Nightmares In The Afternoon is due in March 2024 on Fuzzed And Buzzed

CARGO COLLECTIVE

MARTA DEL GRANDI
SELVA
FIRE RECORDS LP / CD

A refined devotional suite of astute pop that flows effortlessly with a Laurel Canyon sparkle, Lynchian etherealism and dramatic Morricone scores. "Utterly beautiful" Clash

BAS JAN
BACK TO THE SWAMP
FIRE RECORDS LP / CD

From the London-based experimental post punk quartet, a poignant collection of perfectly crafted pop songs that retains their authentic indie edginess. "Beautifully fractured art pop" MOJO

DEATH PILL
DEATH PILL (2ND EDITION)
NEW HEAVY SOUNDS LP / CD

Death Pill, are an all-female hardcore punk power trio of considerable muscle from Ukraine, combining metalcore, punk, thrash metal and oodles of 'Riot Grrl' vibe.

DAVE EVANS
ELEPHANTASIA
EARTH RECORDINGS LP / CD

Newly remastered and rediscovered this legendary super rare album was originally released on Village Thing. For fans of Nick Drake, Bill Fay and Davy Graham. "Cult status guaranteed" Uncut.

BONNACONS OF DOOM
SIGNS
ROCKET RECORDINGS LP / CD

The mirrored masked collective return with their mighty 2nd album. Transcendent powers of heavy amplification, psychedelic explorations & immersive electronic repetitions combine to create an incredibly unique listening experience.

EMPTY COUNTRY
EMPTY COUNTRY II
TOUGH LOVE LP / CD

2nd album of visceral, post-Americana indie rock from Empty Country, the most recent outlet for Cymbals Eat Guitars, Joseph D'Agostino. Recorded at Mitch Easter's studio (R.E.M.) studio with John Agnello, ECII is an ambitious, widescreen meditation on the collapse of America.

THE MOUNTAIN GOATS
JENNY FROM THEBES
MERGE RECORDS LP / CD

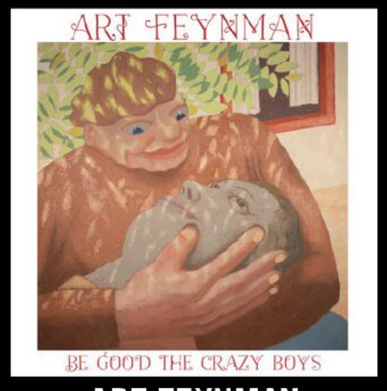
Nine songs leading up to the day Jenny bought the Kawasaki, two from the immediate aftermath, and one from a distant highway down the road.

BEIRUT
HADSEL
POMPEII RECORDS LP / CD

Zachary Condon describes "The few hours of light would expose the unfathomable beauty of the mountains & the fjords, & the hours-long twilights would fill me with subdued excitement. I'd like to believe that scenery is somehow present in the music."

DIRT BUYER
DIRT BUYER II
BAYONET RECORDS LP / CD

Joe Sutkowski has entered a new era of Dirt Buyer, representing the vibrancy of his red-dyed hair and invigorating live performances. 'Dirt Buyer II' is a reintroduction and an emotional, sonic blitz.

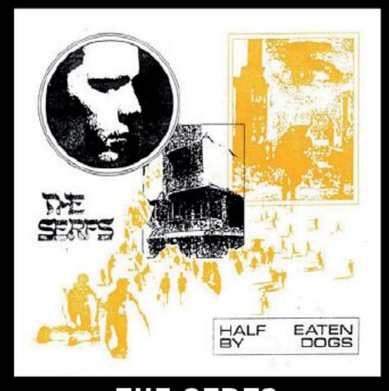


ART FEYNMAN
BE GOOD THE CRAZY BOYS
WESTERN VINYL LP / CD

Art Feyman's new album stitches art pop and worldbeat into an electric quilt of anxiety-induced mania, and relentless grooves, while affectionately evoking predecessors like Lizzy Mercier Descloux and Talking Heads

SUNWATCHERS
MUSIC IS VICTORY OVER TIME
TROUBLE IN MIND RECORDS LP / CD

Blazing & cathartic 5th album from the Brooklyn group Sunwatchers synergies everything great about what they do, fusing fiery avant-spiritual jazz & mind-bending psychedelia with a righteous punk spirit & an infectious & freaky sense of humor.



THE SERFS
HALF EATEN BY DOGS
TROUBLE IN MIND RECORDS LP / CD

The 3rd album from these beguiling Cincinnati, OH synth-punks laces a post-industrial electronic pulse into motorik punk ragers, addictive late-night floor-fillers, & ghostly, atmospheric soundscapes. Stygian coldwave that feels simultaneously alien & entrancing

MINT FIELD
APRENDER A SER
FELTE LP

Mint Field channel their unique blend of avant psych shoegaze against complex rhythms, loud, shimmering guitars, and softly sighing vocals, on this intimate exploration of nostalgia and the melancholy of daily life.

DAVID EUGENE EDWARDS
HYACINTH
SARGENT HOUSE LP / CD

Debut solo album, known for leading beloved bands 16 Horsepower and Wovenhand. He delivers a sound uniquely his own, with a vulnerability & introspection unheard from him before. Hyacinth puts the man's voice, & sparing instrumentation into the main focus.

HALF STACK
SITTING PRETTY
ROYAL OAKIE CD

Building on the dusty country and garage inflected indie-rock of their past releases, "Sitting Pretty" thrums with an expansive energy, adding optimistic songwriting and power-pop melodies to the mix.

VIDEO AGE
AWAY FROM THE CASTLE
WINSPEAR LP / CD

'On its surface, 'Away From the Castle' is a document of a band having fun & rediscovering their love for making music together, but it's also their most honest & personal work yet. Video Age distilled to its purest form.'

CARGO COLLECTIVE: AN AMALGAMATION OF RECORD SHOPS AND LABELS DEDICATED TO BRINGING YOU NEW MUSIC

IRELAND: DUBLIN - SPINDIZZY / KILKENNY - ROLLER COASTER SCOTLAND: DUNDEE - ASSAI / EDINBURGH - ASSAI / EDINBURGH - THORNE RECORDS / GLASGOW - ASSAI / GLASGOW - LOVE MUSIC / GLASGOW - MONORAIL WALES: ABERYSTWYTH - ANDY'S RECORDS / CARDIFF - SPILLERS / NEWPORT - DIVERSE / SWANSEA - DERRICKS NORTH- WEST: LIVERPOOL - 81 RENSHAW LTD / LIVERPOOL - PROBE / MANCHESTER - PICCADILLY RECORDS / NANTWICH - APPLESTUMP RECORDS LTD / PRESTON - ACTION RECORDS NORTH-EAST: BINGLEY - FIVE RISE / HARROGATE - P & C MUSIC / HEADINGLEY - VINYL WHISTLE / HUDDERSFIELD - VINYL TAP / LEEDS - CRASH LEEDS - JUMBO RECORDS / NEWCASTLE - J G WINDOWS / NEWCASTLE - BEATDOWN / NEWCASTLE - REFLEX / SHEFFIELD - BEAR TREE / SHEFFIELD - RECORD COLLECTOR / SHEFFIELD - SPINNING DISCS MIDLANDS: CAMBRIDGE - LOST IN VINYL / CAMBRIDGE - RELEVANT / COVENTRY - JUST DROPPED IN / LEAMINGTON SPA - SEISMIC / LEIGHTON BUZZARD - BLACK CIRCLE / LETCHWORTH - DAVID'S MUSIC / LOUTH - OFF THE BEATEN TRACK / NOTTINGHAM - ROUGH TRADE / OXFORD - TRUCK STORE / OXON - STRUMMER ROOM RECORDS / WITNEY -WITNEY TRUCK SOUTH: BEXHILL ON SEA - MUSIC'S NOT DEAD / BLANDFORD FORUM - REVOLUTION ROCKS / BRIGHTON - RESIDENT / BURY ST.EDMUNDS - VINYL HUNTER / GODALMING - RECORD CORNER / LEIGH-ON-SEA - FIVES / LONDON - BANQUET GRAVITY / LONDON - CASBAH / LONDON - FLASHBACK / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE EAST / LONDON - ROUGH TRADE TALBOT RD / LONDON - SISTER RAY / LUTON - VINYL REVELATIONS / NORWICH - SOUNDCLASH / NORWICH / VENUS VINYL / ROMSEY - HUNDRED / SOUTHSEA - PIE & VINYL / SOUTHEND ON SEA - SOUTH RECORDS / ST ALBANS - EMPIRE RECORDS / WATFORD - PARADE VIBES / WIMBORNE - SQUARE RECORDS / WHITSTABLE - GATEFIELD SOUNDS / WINCHESTER - ELEPHANT RECORDS SOUTH WEST: BRISTOL - ROUGH TRADE / CHELTENHAM - BADLANDS / FALMOUTH - JAM FROME - RAVES FROM THE GRAVE / MARLBOROUGH - SOUND KNOWLEDGE / TOTNES - DRIFT MAILORDER AND INTERNET ONLY STORES: BLEEP.COM / BOOMKAT.COM / NORMANRECORDS.COM / PEBBLE RECORDS CO.UK / RECORDSTORE.CO.UK

2ND FLOOR - 25 HEATHMANS ROAD, LONDON SW6 4TJ - WWW.CARGORECORDS.CO.UK - 0207 731 5125

Flower Power

A deluxe reproduction of **DONOVAN**'s 1967 double album *A Gift From A Flower To A Garden* heralds a deep-dive reissue campaign. **CHRISTOPHER BUDD** ventures into the flora

From a forest of reissues and box sets, sometimes something genuinely special emerges. Like The state51 Conspiracy's beautiful new edition of Donovan's, which is being enthusiastically unpacked before our eyes by the London label's Gordon Wallace. Despite its historic status as one of the very first box sets in pop music, it hasn't been reissued on vinyl in Donovan's favoured mono form since its 1967 UK release, until now.

The team at state51 have been working with print and packaging production specialist Daniel Mason of Something Else over the last five years to make the set as historically accurate as possible, a process Gordon describes as "forensic". And it turns out that this is no overstatement. "The box is handmade using paper from a batch from the '60s," Daniel explains. And even the new is designed to sit comfortably alongside the old, with liner notes by Will Hodgkinson "printed on lovely hemp paper, approved by Don!" laughs Gordon. In fact, the close attention of Donovan himself to every aspect of this release is evident, with all 500 copies of the ultra-limited-edition hand-numbered and signed by the man himself. "Everybody gets a signature. Don has touched every single one of these certificates."

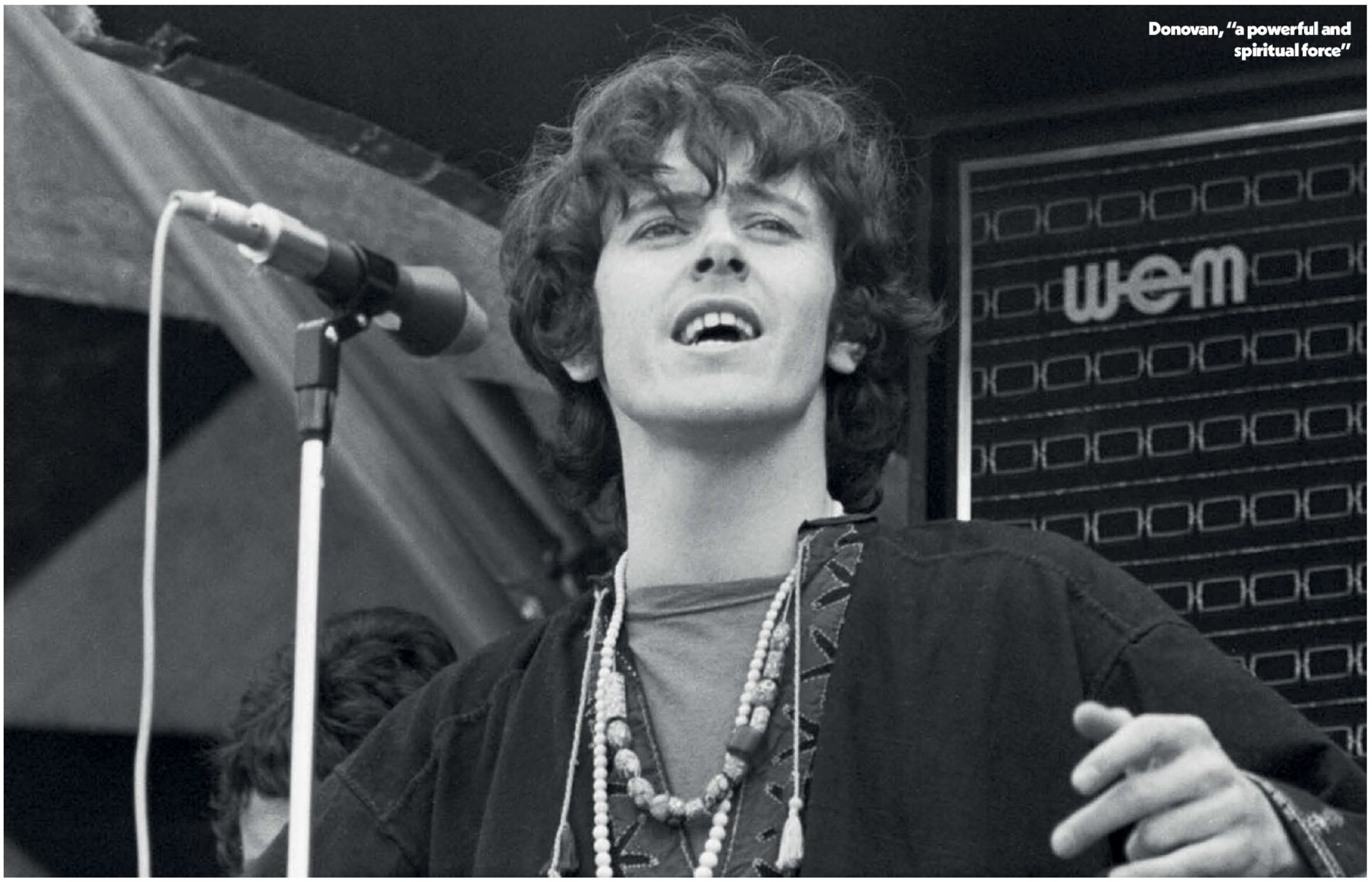
"Donovan is a powerful spiritual force," offers Daniel. "I have been blessed to be able to work on this project." And it's clear that this is a huge moment for the whole label. "It's amazing that a fully independent label like state51 has the UK and Ireland catalogue of somebody like Donovan," Gordon recognises. "We can take proper care and diligence and work directly with him. I'm in contact with him all the time on everything. He's all over the whole thing. He's approved everything: copy, the shading of the colour of the box… he's *literally* all over it!"

The release will be accompanied by a double-A side single combining 'Wear Your Love Like Heaven' and 'The Tinker And The Crab', one track from each of the LP's very different discs. "That might be more available in shops than the box set will be," explains Gordon. "The box set is going to be available in selected shops, but predominantly it'll be available from our website and Don's website. And I know that Don will also sell some with direct dedications as he does off his website."

A Gift From A Flower To A Garden is just the start of an exciting new chapter for state51 and the Donovan catalogue, with a multi-year series of reissues in the planning and even the tantalising promise of unheard material to come. Watch this space.

"Don's approved everything: copy, the shading of the colour of the box… he's *literally* all over it!"

A Gift From A Flower To A Garden is out on 1st December on The state51 Conspiracy



Donovan, "a powerful and spiritual force"

BILLY TIBBALS

"Billy Tibbals is excellent fun!"
Neil Hannon

"Billy's songs resonate with his audience and embody a youthful, nostalgic joy."
The Groovement

"Tibbals throws in a sugar-rush of strings and piano, swaggering guitar licks, and fantastical lyrics — proving why he's at the forefront of Hollywood's rock 'n' roll scene."
Paperface Zine

"Some people are born to rock, some are born for the stage. Billy Tibbals is a both."
We Write About Music

STAY TEENAGE

AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE NOW

NIGHTLIFE STORIES

Coming Soon

www.billytibbals.com

it's a **happening** thing

Places Of The Mind

Fromer Midlake leader Tim Smith tells **CAMILLA AISA** about his decade-in-the-making solo album, released under the name **HARP**

"The Daughters Of Albion weep; a trembling lamentation / Upon their mountains; in their valleys, sighs towards America". These are words from 1793, from William Blake's poem 'Visions Of The Daughters Of Albion', but they seem to reflect Tim Smith's inner life quite perfectly – those ancient images of Albion touching the heart and mind of a 21st century musician from Texas. Whilst he didn't originally conceive a title for his long-awaited debut as Harp, necessity called ("Harp is a little too generic, I needed something so that people could find the album") and the word, aided by Blake's influence on some of the lyrics, materialised: *Albion*.

"It comes from my fascination with so many aspects of Britain, especially the medieval and renaissance periods," the former Midlake chief songwriter and vocalist reflects. "The grey skies, the landscapes, the cobblestone villages, the pubs… My whole thing is, I romanticise it all through a lens of the '70s and '80s, through the TV shows, movies and music I grew up with." No matter their connection to history and reality, these places are ideals first. Smith remembers visiting Herstmonceux Castle a few years ago, "I'm there looking at the castle but I know that it's not really the thing that's in my head," he explains. "I couldn't experience it in real time. In my head, it will always be a romanticised view of it. Always something in the past, always nostalgic, never in the moment. Music is the best possible way for me to get to it."

Don't expect reverent, tradition-observing folk though. The conception of *Albion*, some 10 years in the making, started with Smith rediscovering new old favourites from the '80s, thanks in part to fan mail. "I was already headed in that direction, listening to *The Blurred Crusade* by The Church," he says. "Then someone wrote to me and said I should check out The Cure's *Faith*. Once I did that I was really hooked." Add to the mix a love of Cocteau Twins' atmospheric use of drum machines and contributions from Smith's wife Kathi Zung (also met through the wonders of emails) and *Albion* feels more than anything else timeless. "It was freeing, I was no longer the bad guy," Smith laughs as he talks of making his first solo album. "I could take as long as I wanted to."

Albion is out on 1st December on Bella Union

Tim Smith and Kathi Zung AKA Harp

happening right now

PHOTO: ELE MARCHANT

Nature Boys

Sunshine and rainbows gleam in the jingle-jangle sound of **HUTCH**

A safari suited explorer stumbles through dense foliage to discover a strange group of figures adorned in white robes with painted faces. Soon they have cast him under a spell and lead him in an ecstatic dance.

It could be a whimsical remake of *The Wicker Man*. In reality, what you're watching is the charming video for 'The Bow', the latest single by Brighton band Hutch. Chiming guitars, wistful vocals and a wide-eyed sense of wonder in three minutes: the song is a sweet farewell to a summer fading from view. The sense of the absurd shown in the promo permeates much of what the band do, from a name inspired by the rabbit protagonist of a Wallace & Gromit film to their playful description of themselves as "Twang-Pop Post Yacht-Rock Psychers".

Formed in 2020, Hutch is Charlie Bogg (vocals, bass), Owen Bullock (vocals, drums), Jack Pritchard (vocals, guitar) and Dan Shepherd (vocals, guitar), accompanied on harp and synthesiser by Eva Lunny. Having developed a loyal following in their home city, they've recently been on a larger European tour supporting Gitkin. "We saw the glistening lakes of Zurich, the misty mornings of Hamburg and the mighty castle of Edinburgh," enthuses Shepherd.

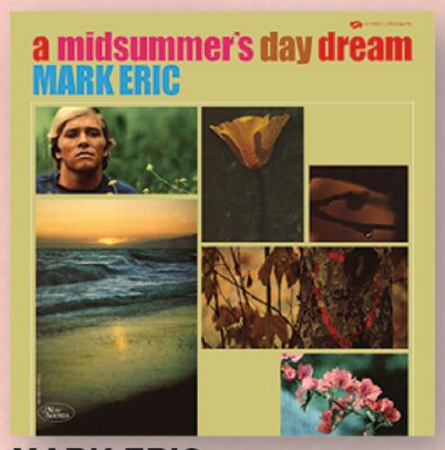
That feeling of adventure and discovery also pervades Hush song lyrics. "We purposely focus on finding the beauty in natural things like snails, rainbows and plants," Shepherd elaborates. "We find inspiration in the weirdness beneath paving stones." It's certainly not every band that can sing so winningly, as on an earlier release, from the perspective of a potted plant.

Hutch is set to deliver on early promise with a forthcoming EP and first UK headline tour. "Hopefully you will be able to catch us on the festival circuit," affirms Shepherd, "and then maybe after that, the moon". Just like the fictional bunny that inspired their name, we'll be all ears.

As told to Clive Webb

Cherry Red Records

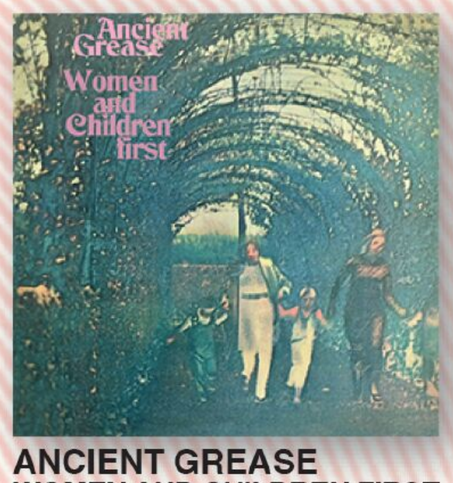
www. cherryred.co.uk Find us on



MARK ERIC
A MIDSUMMER'S DAY DREAM
VINYL EDITION
CRNOWLP8

PENTANGLE
REUNIONS : LIVE & BBC SESSIONS 1982 - 2011
4 CD BOX SET
CRTREE4BOX027

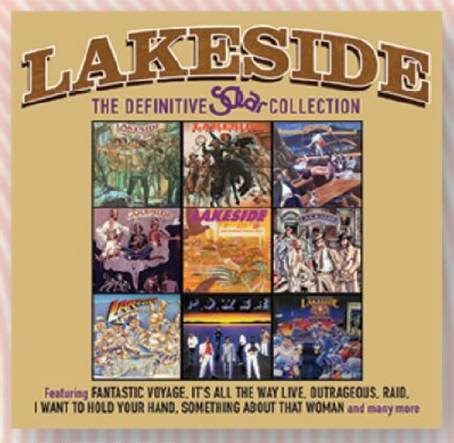
PETER HAMMILL
IN A FOREIGN TOWN / OUT OF WATER 2023
2 CD EDITION
EANTCD21102



ANCIENT GREASE
WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST
ECLEC2851

LES BAXTER
EXOTICA ABSOLUTE
2 CD EDITION
PSALM23:118D

LENE LOVICH
TOY BOX : THE STIFF YEARS
4 CD BOX SET
CRCDBOX146



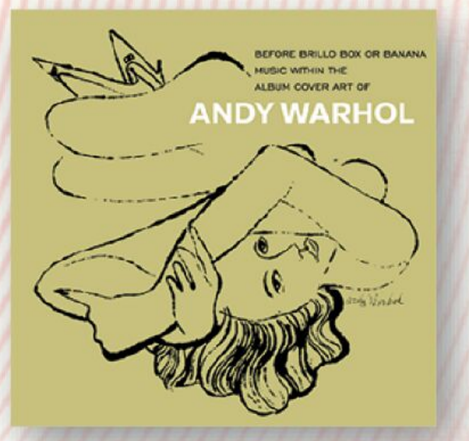
LAKESIDE
THE DEFINITIVE SOLAR COLLECTION
3 CD EDITION
ROBIN67T

FAMILY
BANDSTAND
ECLEC2850

VARIOUS ARTISTS
LOOKING FOR THE MAGIC
3 CD BOX SET
CRSEGBOX139

VARIOUS ARTISTS
WE CAN WORK IT OUT
3 CD BOX SET
CRJAM3BOX020

THE TORNADOS
LOVE AND FURY
5 CD BOX SET
TCTBX8



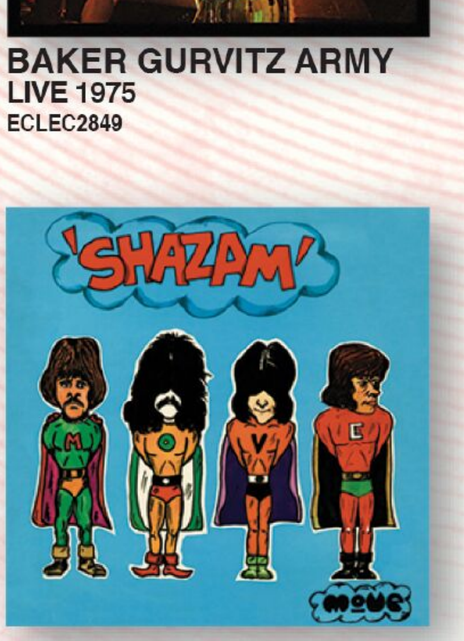
VARIOUS ARTISTS
ANDY WARHOL - BEFORE BRILLO BOX OR BANANA
4 CD EDITON
ACME370CDX

BAKER GURVITZ ARMY
LIVE 1975
ECLEC2849

BRINSLEY SCHWARZ
THINKING BACK
7 CD BOX SET
CDLEM7BOX250

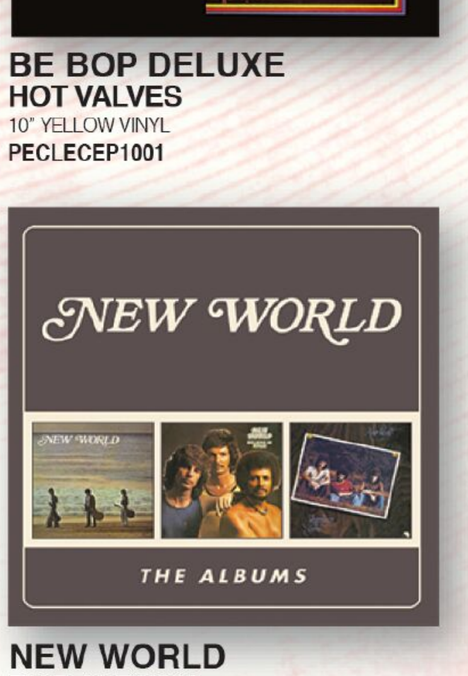
BE BOP DELUXE
HOT VALVES
10" YELLOW VINYL
PECLECEP1001

NEKTAR
REMEMBER THE FUTURE
4 CD + BLU RAY BOX SET
ECLEC52846

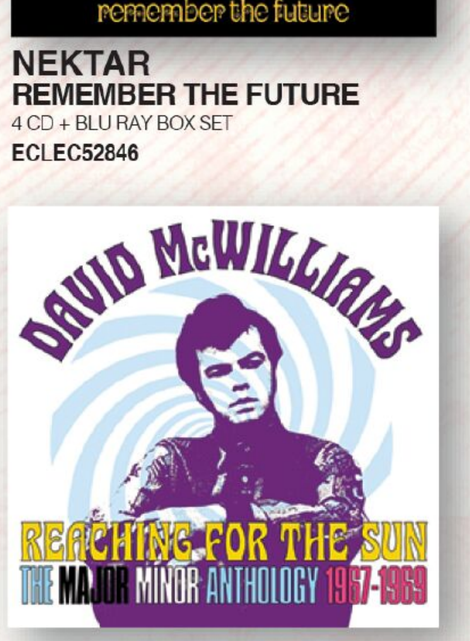


THE MOVE
SHAZAM
ON VINYL
ECLECLP2538

WIZZARD
THE SINGLES COLLECTION
2 CD EDITION
QGLAM2CD200



NEW WORLD
THE ALBUMS
3 CD EDITION
QGLAMCDT175



DAVID McWILLIAMS
REACHING FOR THE SKY
2 CD EDITION
QCRSEG2131D

FOR MORE DETAILS ON THESE AND OTHER RELEASES AND HOW TO ORDER, CALL OUR MAILORDER HOTLINE ON 020 8996 3120 OR VISIT THE WEBSITE

www. cherryred.co.uk

www.cherryred.tv
UNIQUE IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

CHERRY RED.TV

it's a **happening** thing

West Side Migratory

Bay Area duo **STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND** release an "anti-guitar" album full of '60s pop sensibilities, wry observations, and masterful arrangements.

DUNCAN FLETCHER takes note

London-born Alec Palao is now based in the San Francisco Bay Area, as is his long-time friend and bandmate in The Seeds, Paul Kopf. (Readers may be aware of Alec through his archival work for Ace Records amongst other things.) Geographical dislocation and feeling out of sync with the modern world led them to call their new project Strangers In A Strange Land. An eponymous debut album is out now. "While I tend to handle the bulk of the musical stuff," Alec tells us, "Paul is incredible at freewheeling melodies and vocal arrangements, a one-man 5th Dimension."

Paul's vocals are impressive whether fronting folk-pop, garage-rock, or the orchestrated arrangement of the album's closing track 'A Pagan Place'. So, were there any songs that were particularly enjoyable to record? "To sing, 'Xylazine' is my favourite," says Paul. "I just love the textures, the layers of voices, the build-up to the chorus. The whole vibe of it. Alec did a wonderful job on that one, a stand-out track for me and a departure from what most people who know us would expect."

The music of the mid to late '60s in all its guises is big influence on the album, not least the era's great arrangers. *Shindig!* suggests David Axelrod as an influence on sole instrumental 'Choucroute (Thème des Étrangers)'. "I'll take Axelrod but actually 'Choucroute' is more Jean-Claude Vannier," says Alec. "We tried to write some lyrics," adds Paul, "but it felt better as an instrumental, like something in a Mario Bava flick."

"I'm a student of the great arrangers and throughout the album there's probably a lot of small but audible cues from Jack Nitzsche, David Whitaker," says Alec. "Also, Dina Maccabee, who did strings on several tracks made a real difference. Her arrangement on 'A Pagan Place', though it follows my brief, completely altered the flavour of the track, for the better." Other contributors include Clem Burke (Blondie) and Prairie Prince (The Tubes, Todd Rundgren) on drums, and Shel Talmy, who helped produce and arrange two tracks.

The album's cover features a painting of a London bus beneath the Archway Road bridge by Alec's brother Edmund. It's a spot referred to in the song '29 Or 134', the tune for which Alec has had since his late '80s London days. "I hear a bit of Burt Bacharach on '29 Or 134', plus a little Oasis on 'Poison Chalice'," says Paul. Listeners can decide for themselves whether Oasis influence what Alec describes as an "anti-guitar record", but one thing not in contention is how good it all sounds.

Strangers In A Strange Land is out now via strangersinastrangeland.bandcamp.com

hear & now

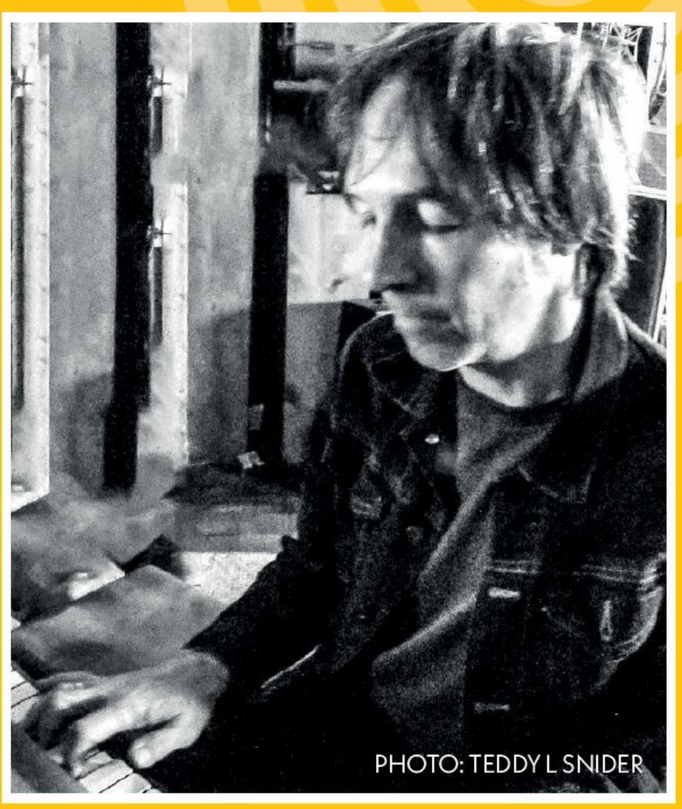


PHOTO: TEDDY L SNIDER

PAUL CHASTAIN of The Small Square and Velvet Crush shares his current fave raves

LISTENING (OLD)

It was a while ago that I ran across the unreleased Cheap Trick *Steve Albini Sessions* from 1997(?) on the interwebs but it wasn't until recently that I really dove in and fully checked it out. Though I've been a fan of the fellow Illinoisans forever, absorbing these recordings has put me on the path to new obsession with the band. The recording, though reportedly still unfinished, reveals and documents the essence of a band that has never been off the road. A stripped down, raw, rocking version of the songs from their second album *In Color*, plus a few extras. Also hearing Brian Eno, Love, Bill Evans these days.

LISTENING (NEW)

The Lilac Time *Dance Till All The Stars Come Down*, the latest release from singer/songwriter/producer Stephen Duffy, finds him at peak form and master of his domain. A timely, beautiful folk-rock experience from start to finish. Admittedly, there is a hint of bias on my part due to Stephen being an old friend who did stellar work on the *Teenage Symphonies To God* album by my other band Velvet Crush. Also, Sharon Van Etten's *We've Been Going About This All Wrong* is very much all right.

READING

On a recent trip to Mie Prefecture, Japan, I was treated to a visit to small, unassuming museum dedicated to the life and work of one of the prefecture's more famous sons, Edogawa Rampo. Generally considered the father of Japanese mystery writing, nine of his stories are collected and translated in *Japanese Tales Of Mystery & Imagination*.

VIEWING

Todd Field's *Tár*. I enjoyed the unconventional but awesome look and the use of sounds and music almost as characters. The performances are top tier and the film seemed quite believable and, at times, felt a little like a documentary. In the guilty pleasures department, *The Wheel Of Time* TV series as well as John Krasinski's turn as Jack Ryan.

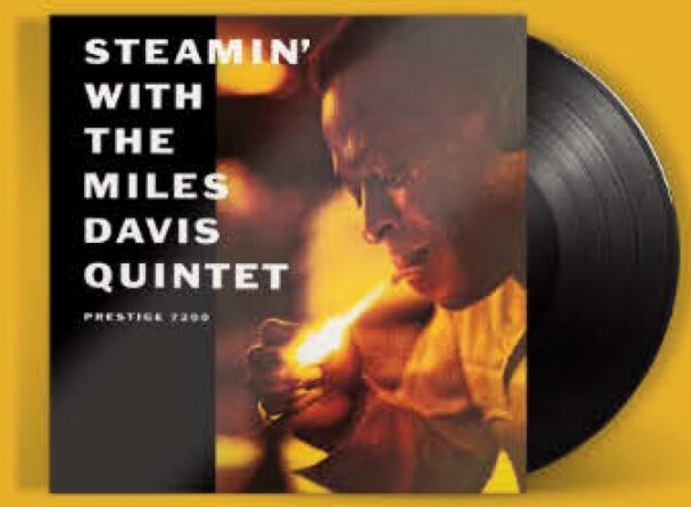
As told to Andy Morten

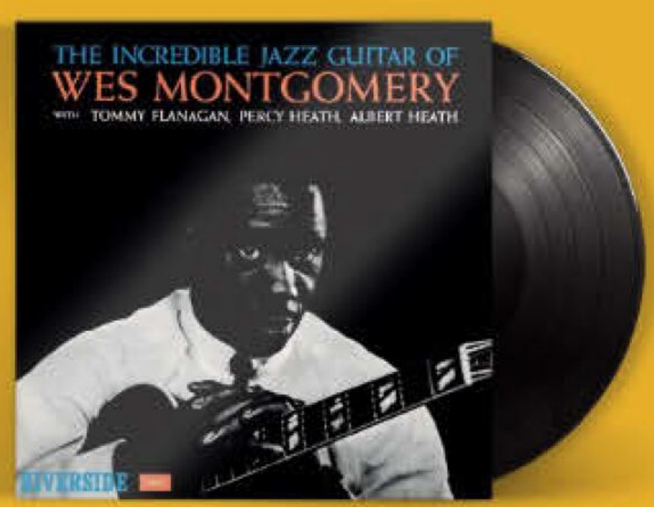
The Small Square's Ours & Others is out on 31st October on Farm To Label

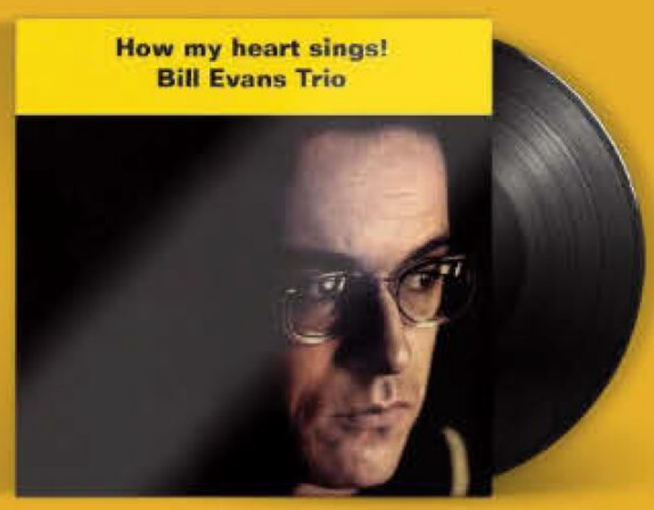
CRAFT™
• RECORDINGS •

jazz

ESSENTIALS







ORDER HERE

ORDER NOW

CRAFT

it's a **happening** thing

Are Ghosts Retro?

The Battersea Poltergeist, *The Witch House*, and now the *Uncanny* TV show (along with its radio predecessor), have made **DANNY ROBINS** something of a celebrity – the Arthur C Clarke of modern times.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS hooks up with the passionate writer/presenter to discuss affection for the past, inspiration, and the renaissance of the supernatural

"I can feel a very deep nostalgia in people at the moment," states Danny Robins. "Once again, there's this interest in the limitless, boundless mysteries of our youth… UFOs, ghosts, cryptozoology and stories of Yetis and Bigfoot. You could also argue that at a time when our world is particularly chaotic, uncertain, and frightening, we are drawn to another time, and world. We want to lose ourselves."

Robins has very much become a brand, skillfully documenting people's own spooky personal experiences. The successful stage play *2:22 – A Ghost Story* is another of his creations. Along with Mark Gatiss and Reece Shearsmith (he's worked with both), the movies of Alice Lowe (including Gareth Tunley's *The Ghoul*), and Will Maclean's novel *The Apparition Phase*, Danny is integral in our recent obsession with witty and very British horror. "It all comes from a childhood obsession with ghost stories that have flourished into the making of ghost stories as adults," he states. This isn't the stuff of folly, of night vision recorders and camp mediums, it's an art form that embraces the slow build and tension of pre-21st century storytelling and folklore.

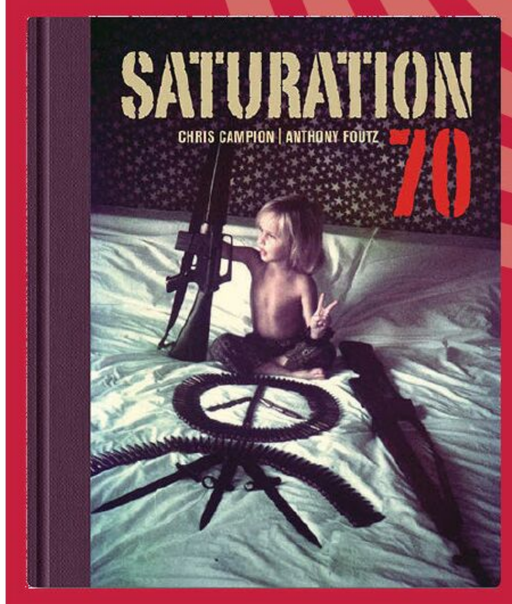
"Yes, there's something about that pre smartphone era that is very uncomplicated. Stories set in the past remove that element of complication," he says of the period on which he predominantly focuses. "Our reference points absolutely come from '70s movies like *Don't Look Now* and *The Wicker Man*. I re-watched *Alien* recently and was struck by the use of sound design; the way it moves from lulling you into a sense of security with low quiet sounds to making you jump with something very loud. Films of that period were not afraid to linger. Modern horror feels compelled to constantly move the story on. With films like Mark Jenkins' *Enys Men*, there's a definite looking back to that '70s period. A folk-horror revival is very much in the air. You can see that in music as well, which we really embraced with Gwenno for *The Witch Farm*."

So, are ghosts retro? "Well, yes. It feels like society is a bit broken now, a bit out of shape, out of joint. We are reaching back for the things that made us feel comfortable in childhood, and for a lot of us ghosts were absolutely one of those things. There's something consoling about being scared within agreed parameters. And, just maybe, there is also the hope, as these stories suggest, that death is not the end."

Catch Uncanny on the BBC iPlayer and Sounds. The Uncanny: I Know What You Saw stage show closes in Glasgow on 27th November. 2:22 – A Ghost Story continues its theatrical tour throughout the UK. The book Into The Uncanny has also just been published. Visit dannyrobins.com for details

Danny Robins. Note the red mac

good **news**



In 1969, director Anthony Foutz and *2001: A Space Odyssey* visual effects maestro Douglas Trumbull started work on environmentally themed science-fiction film **SATURATION 70**. The countercultural cast included The Mamas & The Papas' Michelle Phillips and Gram Parsons, who, with former fellow Byrd Roger McGuinn, was due to compose the soundtrack. Then the future was cancelled. The film was never completed and much of the footage lost. Now Foutz and co-author Chris Campion have written a deluxe book documenting the extraordinary story of what might have been. Rewards await those willing to help open the pod doors on publication by contributing to the Kickstarter campaign. *www.kickstarter.com/projects/wolfandsalmon/saturation-70-a-deluxe-art-book-about-a-lost-sci-fi-film*

Cleopatra Records continues its **NAZZ** reissue campaign this December with a new vinyl release of the band's second album *Nazz Nazz*. Originally released in 1969, the record had a troubled history. Recording started in London but a run-in with The Musician's Union forced a relocation to Los Angeles. Bitter arguments within the group about production and songwriting also led to the departure of creative maestro Todd Rundgren. For all these difficulties, the album has been retrospectively hailed as their finest recording and the new edition is a fitting tribute to lead singer and keyboard player Robert 'Stewkey' Antoni following his passing last month. *cleorecs.com/home*

Prepare for an epic journey through the past with the reissue in November of **NEIL YOUNG**'s *Archives Vol 1: 1963-1972*. Unavailable for over a decade, the 8-CD box set includes an array of unreleased, alternative, demo and live recordings from Shakey's early days in The Squires through his time in Buffalo Springfield and breakthrough to stardom as a solo artist and member of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. Charting the formative decade of Young's long and illustrious career, the reissue is housed in the same distinctive packaging as the original edition and comes with a poster and illustrated 24-page booklet. *neilyoungarchives.com*

ALLAH LAS ZUMA 85

the new album ZUMA 85 out October 13

Cultivate Diffuse

INNOVATIVE LEISURE

it's a **happening** thing

Hung Up On A Screen

This year's **DOC'N ROLL FILM FESTIVAL** serves up delicious celluloid goodness once again. **SARAH GREGORY** is buying the popcorn

The Doc'n Roll Film Festival celebrates its 10th anniversary this year with some of the very best new independent music documentaries showing across the UK. Here are just a few highlights to tickle your fancy this autumn.

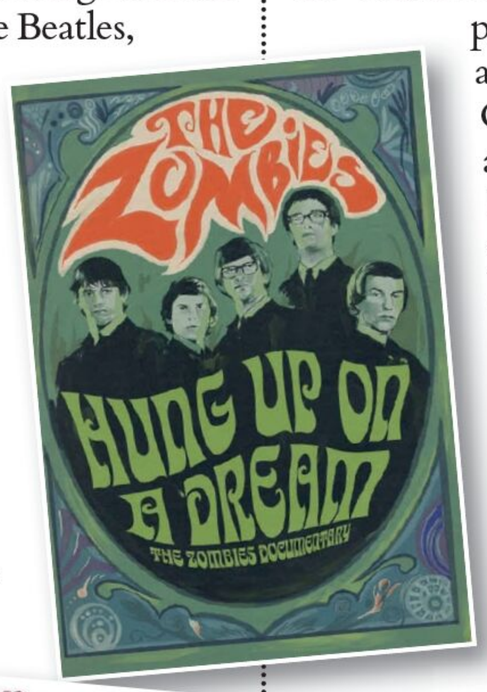
First up is the story of one of this country's most revered session musicians, Nicky Hopkins. Narrated by 'Whispering' Bob Harris, *The Session Man* is the tale of an unsung hero and gifted rock 'n' roll pianist who, over the course of 30 years, clocked up over 250 appearances. Featuring on some of the greatest albums by The Beatles, Stones, Who, Kinks – you name it, Hopkins probably played on it! This is a must for any music fan of the '60s/70s recording scene.

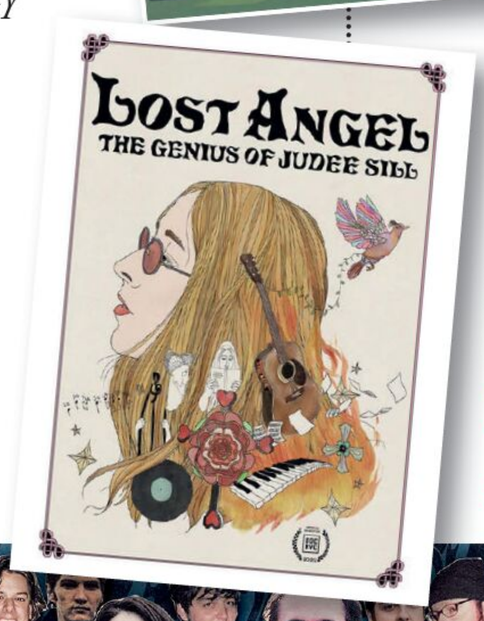
Talking of '60s legends, Robert Schwartzmann's *Hung Up On A Dream: The Zombies* is a fascinating trawl through 60 topsy-turvy years in the music industry. Told by the band themselves, we learn of how they made their masterpiece *Odessey & Oracle,* how they failed to capitalise on its success, and most heart-warmingly, their enduring and lifelong friendship.

Next on the list is The *Free Party: A Folk History*, which takes a fascinating look at the late '80s and early '90s UK free party movement, something *Shindig!* has recently championed and which continues to have unquestionable meaning today. This is the tale of a group of inspirational individuals who attempted to live outside society and party while they were doing it – culminating in 1992's infamous Castlemorton gathering and the ensuing introduction of The Criminal Justice Act. And there's no bandwagon-ing at play here – this story is told by those who lived it.

The Elephant 6 Recording Co documents the formation of the American '90s DIY psych-rock collective based around The Olivia Tremor Control, Neutral Milk Hotel and Apples In Stereo. Inspired by old-school recordings and psychedelia, the Elephant community set about creating a new brand of music that went on to form the basis of lo-fi indie and continues to percolate throughout the psych scene today.

Special mention must also go to the tragic stories of two artists, one known to all of us, the other possibly less familiar. *Lost Angel: The Genius Of Judee Sill* and *Blues Run The Game: The Strange Tale Of Jackson C Frank,* friend of Paul Simon who had the world at his feet before disappearing into obscurity after a series of heart-breaking mis-haps.





Visit docnrollfestival.com for details

Some of the crew featured in *The Elephant 6 Recording Co*

next issue

TWENTY YEARS THAT CHANGED THE FACE OF POP, ROCK AND FASHION

Beatlemania launched a red-hot wind of change and cultural progression that didn't come up for breath until 1984, constantly borrowing from and adapting what went before. We survey the massive changes in music across that period, with some unexpected icons, scene shapers and stars

THE FAIRIES

Essex beat group that issued three very different singles across 1964-65, the last being an R&B/punk classic to rival The Pretty Things. Something new was emerging

BIG STAR

The sound of young Memphis in 1974. How our doomed heroes survived break-ups, breakdowns and crafted a ground-breaking second album from the turmoil

PLASTICLAND

Milwaukee freaks that recast the psychedelic sounds of 1967 for the post-punk '80s

PLUS...

OUR BEST OF 2023, JEFF DEXTER, PP ARNOLD, GRUFF RHYS, WHITE DENIM

NEW ALBUMS FROM

JIM JONES ALL STARS, THE JASMINE MINKS, THE SAND PEBBLES, BITW, HARP

REISSUES FROM

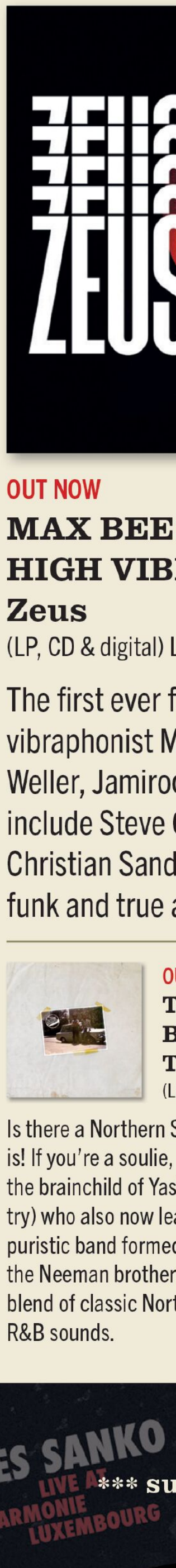
THE MOVE, OTIS REDDING, BRINSLEY SCHWARZ, THE SEEDS, SECOND HAND

AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

PUBLISHED 7th DECEMBER

Mr. Mellow's MUSIC Légère RECORDINGS

Music with a Northern Soul



OUT NOW

MAX BEESLEY'S HIGH VIBES

Zeus

(LP, CD & digital) LEGO 296

The first ever full-length album by vibraphonist Max Beesley (Paul Weller, Jamiroquai). Musicians include Steve Gadd, Dean Parks, Christian Sands etc. Modern jazz funk and true acid jazz.

OUT NOW

THE FAITHFUL BROTHERS

The Faithful Brothers

(LP & digital) MMM 008

Is there a Northern Soul scene in Tel Aviv? Yes, there is! If you're a soulie, look for the Tel Aviv Soul Club, the brainchild of Yashiv Cohen (Men Of North Country) who also now leads The Faithful Brothers, a new puristic band formed with legendary soul collectors the Neeman brothers, creating their own unique blend of classic Northern Soul 45s and early 1960s R&B sounds.

OUT NOVEMBER 2023

DAVID FOSTEX

Dark Yacht

(ltd. LP 300 copies & digital) LEGO 310

A mysterious Yachtrock supergroup with an explicit edge, led by Shawn "Silver Fox" Lee.

OUT NOW

KERBSIDE COLLECTION

Round The Corner

(LP & digital) LEGO 249

The sound of Kerbside Collection harks back to the 60s and 70s Californian West Coast jazz funk such as Wes Montgomery, George Benson, Chico Hamilton, Joe Sample and The Crusaders.

OUT NOW

YOUNG GUN SILVER FOX

The Disco Mixes

(12inch vinyl only, ltd to 300 copies) LEGO 306

"Rolling Back" and "Tip Of The Flame", two favourites from the album "Ticket To Shangri-La" in extended versions.

OUT NOW

RIO 18 FEAT. YOUNG GUN SILVER FOX

She's In L.A.

(7inch & digital) LEGO 293

Soaked in summer sun this is lowriding Californian funk, telling a story about the joy of finding a new life in the City Of Angels, the metropolis by the sea.

OUT NOV. 17

EMM GRYNER

What You Won't Do For Love

(7inch & digital) LEGO 307

A smart, intimate version of the Bobby Caldwell classic backed by the album favourite and modern softrock classic "Valencia".

"She didn't take any crap." Clydie King, in demand in the early '70s

New Direction

CLYDIE KING sang backing vocals with The Rolling Stones, Gene Clark, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Linda Ronstadt, Joe Cocker and countless others. Bob Dylan described her as "my ultimate singing partner" and she could count Steve Marriott amongst her many admirers. Yet her solo work remains undervalued.

PAUL RITCHIE directs us to King's funky 1970 solo debut

Clydie Mae King was born in Dallas, Texas. She started out, in storybook fashion, singing in the local church, before moving with her family to Los Angeles in the early '50s. King began her recording career in 1956 with a doo-wop group called Little Clydie & The Teens. She was soon contributing to Phil Spector recordings and recorded solo singles for the Specialty, Minit and Imperial labels.

Along with Merry Clayton, Venetta Fields and Sherlie Matthews, King eventually became one of the most in-demand back-up and session singers of her time. "I don't remember all the people who I sung for," she said in a '71 interview. In addition to several tracks on *Exile On Main St*, the list included hits like Linda Ronstadt's 'You're No Good' and Lynyrd Skynyrd's 'Sweet Home Alabama'.

It was King who persuaded Clayton to sing on the controversial 'Sweet Home Alabama'. At first, Clayton refused to do the song ("I said, 'I'm not singing about Alabama! I remember those poor little girls killed by racists!'") but King talked her into it. After the session, King told Clayton, "We did our part and this song will live in infamy and we'll continually get paid."

For three years, she and Clayton were in The Raelettes, Ray Charles' revered backing singers. "We thought we knew how to sing, but he taught us both how to do it in a group," Clayton told *Rolling Stone*. "We learned to do what we do and how to be a beautiful woman and how to stand and sit."

By '70, after appearances on albums by Tommy Roe, Neil Diamond, Jackie DeShannon and Barbara Streisand, the women were in demand. Fields was previously an Ikette in The Ike & Tina Turner Revue. Matthews was a singer-

During her mid-60s tenure with Clydie King & The Sweet Things; '70s infamy with The Blackberries (Clydie, third left)

"We thought we knew how to sing, but Ray Charles taught us both how to do it in a group"

Merry Clayton

songwriter at Mirwood and Motown. They joined forces and created The Blackberries.

King's versatile vocal style was a big pull for major rock acts looking to inject gospel, soul and funk influences into their sound. She could sing loud and raucous or soft and gentle, all with consummate ease. Producer Gabriel Mekler had made his mark with Dunhill Records and Steppenwolf. He set up a short-lived imprint called Lizard and signed King as a solo artist, having hired her to sing previously. Mekler wasted no time in pulling a stellar cast of musicians to play on what would become her solo debut, *Direct Me*.

Billy Preston, who happened to be a friend, joined on keyboards and contributed liner notes proclaiming, "I've known her since our church days singing and shouting together as kids. She has got to be one of the prettiest and sweetest girls around, with a soulful and mellow voice, one that you fall in love with right away".

Joining Preston was guitarist David T Walker, who played on several notable albums of the period, including Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions* and Marvin Gaye's *Let's Get It On*. He came along with drummer Paul Humphrey, who also played with Gaye and many others. Bassist Bob West had co-written 'I'll Be There' for The Jackson 5 and had been part of the famous Wrecking Crew of LA studio musicians. Even the engineers were top drawer. Dave Hassinger, who had worked with The Rolling Stones and The Electric Prunes, was joined by Johnny Golden, who had worked on countless albums. Blackberries Merry Clayton and Venetta Fields provided background vocals.

The album showcased King's versatile and expressive vocal range across a varied selection of soul, funk and pop cuts. Old friend Sherlie Matthews contributed one track, the gospel-infused 'Ain't My Stuff Good Enough'. The song was previously recorded by The Mirettes but this version has a loose, rocky feel similar to Ike & Tina Turner's 'It Ain't Right (Lovin' To Be Lovin')'. King's raspy vocal injects some rocky sass into the title cut, a raucous cover of an Otis Redding B-side. The energetic soul stomper features a funky wah-wah guitar, blaring horns and stirring gospel vocals from The Blackberries.

Meckler penned two tracks, 'First Time, Last Time' and 'B Minor', which seemed to push King towards classy pop ballads in a *Dusty In Memphis* or Carole King vein. The punchy Stax soul romp 'Never Like This Before' was penned by Isaac Hayes and David Porter. It was issued as a single, as was the up-tempo northern soul dancer ''Bout Love'. The bluesy 'I Can't Go Without Love' allowed King to stretch her vocal range from sweet to sanctified. A rollocking version of Delanie & Bonnie Bramlett's 'Long Road Ahead' brought out her gospel and country influences. 'You Need Love Like I Do, Don' You', a Norman Whitfield/Barrett Strong song recorded by Gladys Knight & The Pips the same year, is perhaps the funkiest track here, similar in feel to Otis Redding's 'Hard To Handle'. The album closes with a calming, respectful version of The Beatles' 'The Long And Winding Road', orchestrated by William Allen (Mongo Santamaria, Roy Ayers' Ubiquity).

Direct Me sold modestly, its chances of success hampered by a lack of promotion from the fledgling label. Perhaps too rock oriented for soul fans and too soulful for rock fans, it remains ripe for rediscovery.

In '72, Steve Marriott knocked on The Blackberries' door. They recorded an unreleased album with Humble Pie as their backing band and provided backing vocals to the Humble Pie albums *Eat It* and *Thunderbox*.

Clayton remembers King as sweet, but tough. "She didn't take any crap," she said. "She knew how to put you in your place, but she was so sweet."

King released two more solo albums, one billed as *Brown Sugar Featuring Clydie King* ('73); and the disco-orientated *Rushing To Meet You* ('76). Following their lack of success, she returned to singing back-up, working with Dylan during his "born again" period; she appears on *Saved, Shot Of Love* and *Infidels*, and the 2017 concert film *Trouble No More* features King prominently. It closes with her and Dylan seated together at the piano, singing a tender duet on 'Abraham, Martin And John'. On news of her death in 2019, it was Dylan who provided the most fitting tribute. "She was my ultimate singing partner. No one ever came close. We were two soulmates." S!

Direct Me is out now on Floating World

"Rolling!" Pete Townshend in his home studio, 1971

Note Perfect

MARTIN RUDDOCK goes in search of the lost core of **THE WHO**'s *Life House*, and possibly the greatest studio out-take of all time, '**PURE AND EASY**'

At the beginning, there was the note. Or, according to Pete Townshend '*The* Note' – the definite article. Never one to rest on past glories, in spring 1970 The Who's main man was already, restlessly mulling the band's next move after the global success of *Tommy* had transformed them into superstars. An idea percolated over the summer months, a combination of sci-fi dystopia, the Sufi teachings of Meher Baba, post-hippy togetherness and the hypnotic sounds Pete was conjuring in his home studio with his new synthesisers and a tricked-out Lowry organ. *Life House* was a complex multi-media idea, a film treatment, with elaborate live shows held at London's Young Vic theatre. Anticipating the internet by nearly 25 years, the project saw Townshend, by his own admission, "Shoot for the moon." Hitting a creative high point, Townshend had a raft of songs to die for up his sleeve. With funding secured for a film project from Universal Pictures, Pete talked it up to the music press at length as the storyline evolved.

"Basically, it's about someone trying to discover the note that is everything, the essence if you like. But as we are not capable of finding it, he doesn't find it," he told *Disc & Music Echo* in September. It's fair to say that *Life House*, with its layered plot, open-ended development, prescient sci-fi themes and masses of bleeding edge technology was always going to be

tricky to realise in a drizzly pre-decimal England that was still getting its collective head round colour TV and stereo. As '71 dawned and the first of the Young Vic shows loomed, the rest of The Who weren't that sold on the idea either. It went over their heads a little, especially when Pete described his role as of a "computer" who would feed off the audience at the gigs. One early version of the plot had London covered in wire, which had Roger Daltrey glumly pointing out that there wasn't enough wire in the world. "The idea was SO FUCKING SIMPLE! It is not complicated," Townshend wearily said years later.

It's little wonder that Pete was exasperated. After all, he'd explained the germ of *Life House*, of The Note and its power to both heal and destroy to the others over and over again, in a beautiful song, which would serve as an overture to the project. Helpfully, he called it 'The Note'.

In January '71 Townshend delivered a sequenced tape of the *Life House* songs to his bandmates, pointedly leading off with 'The Note', now retitled 'Pure And Easy'. First demoed in late '70 with Pete on all instruments, the original 'Pure And Easy' is gorgeous and fragile, but fully-formed. Musically it reinforces the note theme by long held notes on organ and bass. Lyrically it also lacks the obliqueness of some of *Tommy*'s narrative, laying out the story much more directly than many of its songs.

"There once was a note pure and easy / Playing so free like a breath rippling by,
The note is eternal, I hear it, it sees me / Forever we blend and forever, we die."

Perhaps the last gasp of the soaring, yearning melodicism that the band minted circa *The Who Sell Out,* the full demo version later released on Townshend's *Life House Chronicles* set turns into a near-nine-minute workout with its author gamely flailing on drums, trying to anticipate what Keith Moon might make of it. A further new demo, the elegiac 'The Song Is Over' even recapped the opening verse of 'Pure And Easy' as a coda, much like *Tommy*'s 'Listening To You' refrain.

The initial Young Vic shows saw The Who road-test the new songs, opening many sets again with 'Pure And Easy'. But by March, when the Young Vic residency ended, *Life House* was in disarray. Universal had pulled the funding for the film, and manager Kit Lambert, pointedly more interested in a film version of *Tommy* had little interest in the project. However, Lambert's commercial instincts kicked in.

Slightly estranged from his charges and by now spending much of his time in New York, Lambert pointed out that there was almost a double album's worth of material to make a formidable successor to *Tommy*, and suggested remounting *Life House* as an album project – partly to attempt to rein Townshend's wild creative instincts in, partly to get Pete interested in the *Tommy* film, and partly to get the band to come to him. In an unusual move, an augmented ensemble version of The Who with Mountain's Leslie West on guitar and various keyboard players set up in New York's Record Plant to try and salvage the new songs. Despite a promising start, and an intriguing, fizzy, slightly psychedelic feel to the New York tapes – it didn't go well, with Lambert's problems with cocaine and heroin derailing the project and the ever-self-destructive Moon almost overdosing on some of Kit's stash. A stressed, frazzled Townshend overheard Lambert slagging him off and almost stepped out of a hotel window.

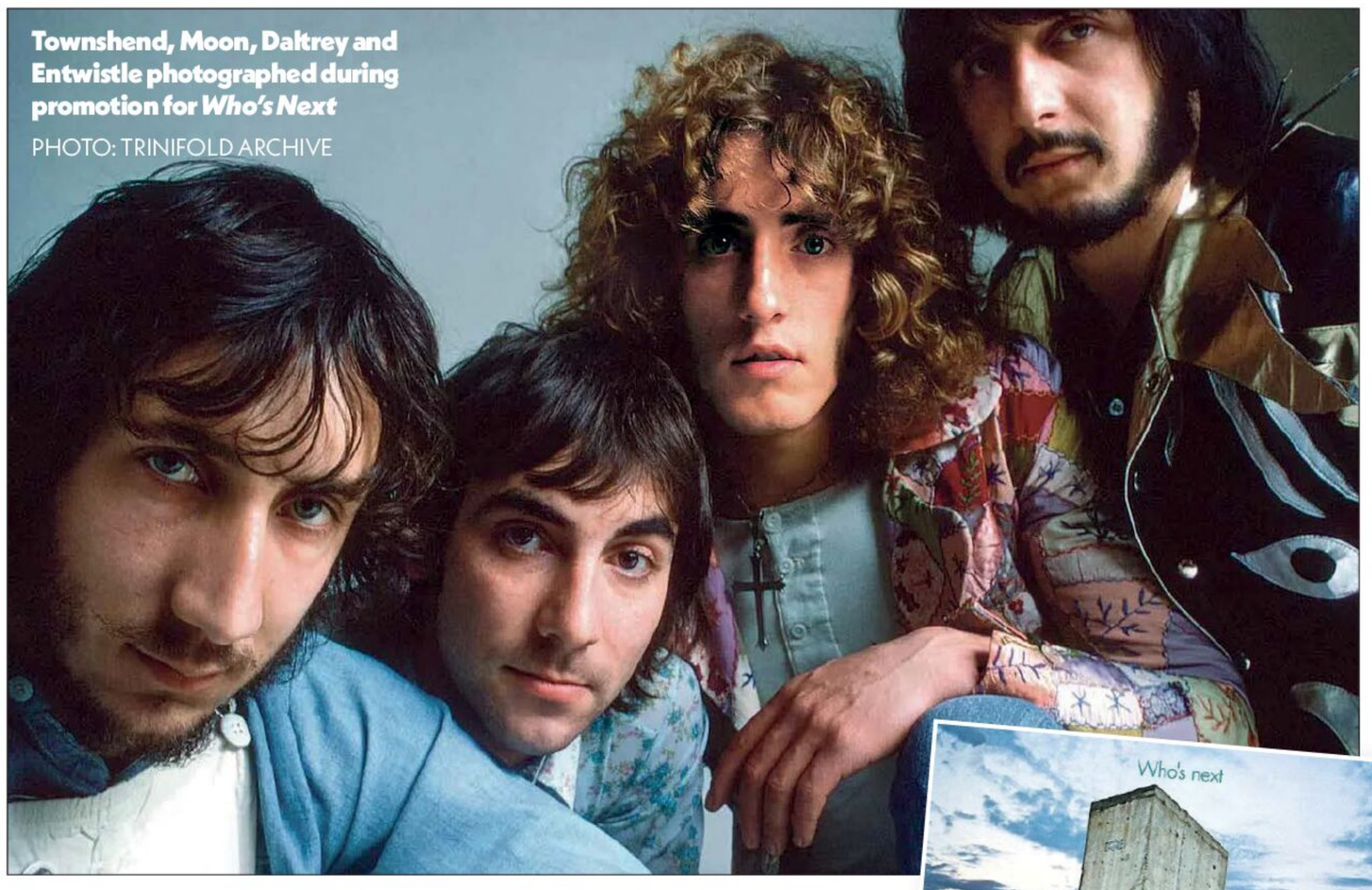
They did manage to cut a superb, almost-there 'Pure And Easy' at the Record Plant, Take 21 of which survives on the new *Who's Next/Life House* box set. Retitled back to 'The Note', it opens with Lambert berating his drummer in upper-class vowels. "Moon, I don't want to hear a single broken beat from you in this whole thing." "That's illogical, captain," quips Moon in response. Moon gets through the take without incident but seems unsure where to go at the closing breakdown while Daltrey starts barking the song's title.

Back in England, the band licked their wounds. Playing another Young Vic show to cement the new arrangements, they ditched the Record Plant tapes and enlisted Glyn Johns to start over. At this stage, a double LP based around *Life House* was still on the table, but the notion receded when Johns lobbied for a single album. A soaring remake of 'Pure And Easy' was made in May. Sharper and more focused, it dialled up the handclaps at the end, and kept Moon's thrashing on a leash. Strong as it was, it failed to make the cut as Johns sequenced *Who's Next*. Pete instructed Glyn, "Don't include things because they tell the story, just include them if they work." Johns followed his instincts and left it off, the song surviving only in the snatch retained in the band version of 'The Song Is Over'. The Note was now a ghostly coda, its removal leaving only vestiges of *Life House* in its wake.

The following year, Townshend dusted down his demo version, editing out several minutes and sweetening it a little for his Baba-themed solo album *Who Came First*.

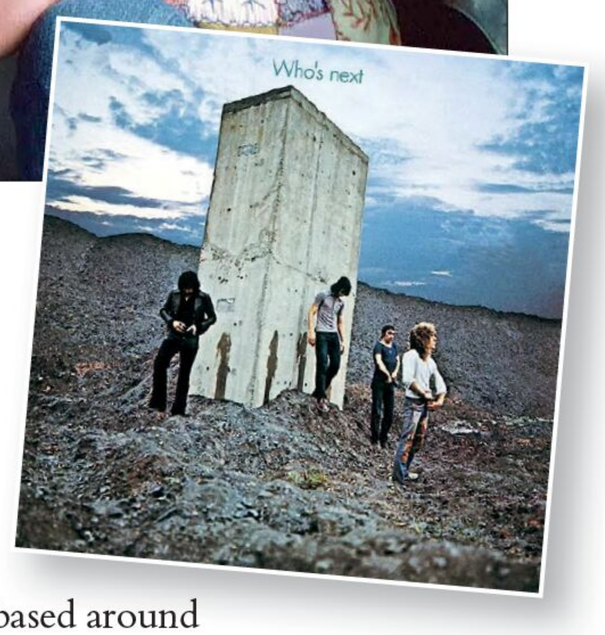
The '71 version was finally pulled from the archives and given a fresh mix by John Entwistle in '74 – arguably lifting *Odds And Sods* into something greater than a selection of intriguing leftovers. 'Pure And Easy' has made a few reappearances in live sets over the years, and *Life House* has never really left Pete Townshend, who remains a committed gadget fiend, and threatens a revival from time to time. Because, for all its various incarnations, its "experience suits", the miles of wire, the Grid… it's still out there – the key to the whole thing. The Note. S!

Who's Next / Life House is out now on Polydor/UMR

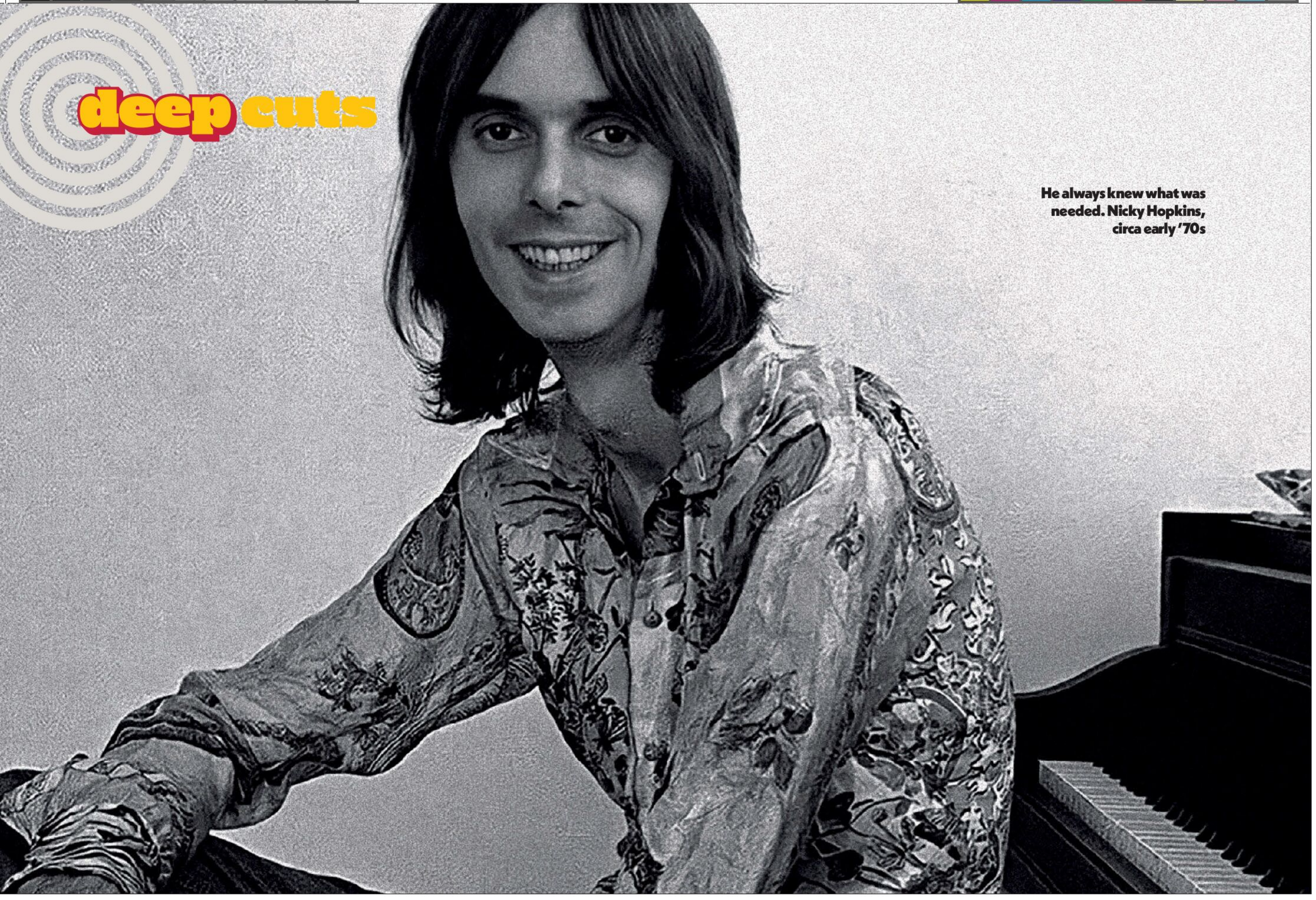


Townshend, Moon, Daltrey and Entwistle photographed during promotion for *Who's Next*

PHOTO: TRINIFOLD ARCHIVE



"Pete Townshend instructed Glyn Johns, 'Don't include things because they tell the story, just include them if they work'"



He always knew what was needed. Nicky Hopkins, circa early '70s

Keeper Of The Keys

As a new documentary film reveals, **NICKY HOPKINS** was the ultimate session rock pianist. A child prodigy, he was unable to join touring bands due to ill-health, instead becoming the master of his domain: the recording studio. He rose to prominence in the '60s, adding his signature sound to key tracks by the Stones, Who, Kinks, Jeff Beck and Beatles (group and solo) before relocating to the States where he joined Quicksilver Messenger Service and recorded with Jefferson Airplane, Art Garfunkel, Harry Nilsson and countless others.

So prolific was he that many of his appearances continue to fly under the radar. Here are 10 of our favourites

CYRIL DAVIES & HIS RHYTHM AND BLUES ALL STARS
Country Line Special
(A-side, Pye International, April 1963)

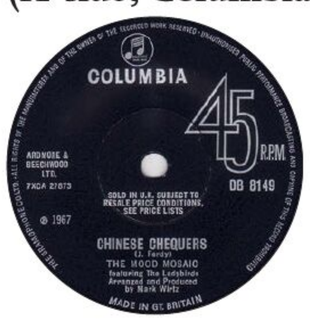
After he split from the grandaddy of them all on the British blues scene, Alexis Korner, back in 1962, harmonica man supreme Cyril Davies put together his R&B All-Stars, and the names that passed through the ranks read like a Who's Who of '60s cool: Carlo Little, Jimmy Page, Long John Baldry and, of course, a teenage Nicky Hopkins. Recorded in February '63, shortly before Hopkins was hospitalised for several months because of the Crohn's disease that dogged him for his entire life, the self-penned 'Country Line Special' is a blistering instrumental driven by Davies' wailing blues harp. Hopkins' pounding piano throughout adds colour and drive to the throb.

THE SESSIONS
Let Me In
(A-side, Fontana, 1965)

An appropriate band name considering the performers here include Chas Hodges, Ritchie Blackmore, Miki Dallon and Nicky Hopkins. Seemingly only released in the US, it's a rip-roaring mod number that predates the essential 1966 single by The Sorrows, more familiar to most readers. The Sessions' version has been comped many times, and appeared on several Blackmore collections, no doubt due to his manic solo, as well as a compilation of work by the song's writer and singer Miki Dallon. ("Can't recall what it sounded like – I've never heard it since!" he says in the CD booklet.) There's a good chance Nicky hasn't heard his propelling pounding of the keys since, either. And can someone tell us who's responsible for those rapid-fire trip-hop drum fills?

"The white-hot backing track is rumoured to feature Jimmy Page, but Hopkins' tinkling piano trills are unmistakable, particularly during the 45-second crescendo that recalls his work on the Stones' 'She's A Rainbow' a few months earlier"

THE MOOD MOSAIC
Chinese Chequers
(A-side, Columbia, March 1967)



The order of the day was easy-listening with an exotic touch and Mark Wirtz and his session men were on the case. Nicky steps up to the plate with groovy piano and subtle harpsichord assisted by the likes of Big Jim Sullivan, who adds his trademark sitar sound to this (con)fusion of Indian and Chinese music with the dulcet wordless vocal tones of The Ladybirds scatting over this infectious two-minute euphonic travelogue. The album of the same name is more of the same and well worth investigation if this is your thing.

TRUTH
Sueno
(A-side, Decca, April 1968)

Frank Aiello and Steve Gold were a vocal duo in the Ryans mould, who got a taste of the big time when their version of The Beatles' 'Girl' cracked the Top 30 in early 1966. Respectable stabs at 'I Go To Sleep' and 'Walk Away Renee' followed without repeating that success, before this pile-driving reconstruction of The Rascals' 'Groovin'' B-side (mis-spelled as 'Seuno' on all UK copies) became their final outing. The white-hot backing track is rumoured to feature Jimmy Page, but Hopkins' tinkling piano trills are unmistakable, particularly during the 45-second crescendo that recalls his work on the Stones' 'She's A Rainbow' a few months earlier.

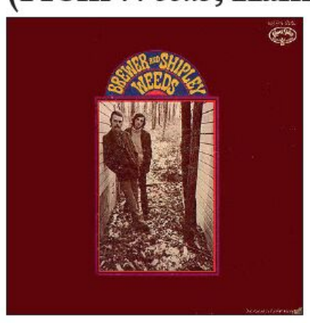
DUNCAN BROWNE
On The Bombsite
(A-side, Immediate, July 1968)

Produced by Andrew Loog Oldham and released on his Immediate label just as it was teetering on the verge of collapse, Duncan Browne's debut LP *Give Me Take You* is today recognised as something of a baroque-pop classic, but at the time was a commercial failure. Steeped in classical music and replete with elaborate choral arrangements, it hints at Nick Drake, Donovan, *Odessey & Oracle* and Paul McCartney at his most ornate. Hopkins plays unobtrusive keyboards on several cuts and, on this achingly lovely piece of nostalgia for childhood, he contributes chimes of what sounds like a harpsichord to the full palette of sounds.

ROY HARPER
Exercising Some Control
(From *Folkjokeopus*, Liberty LP, 1969)

"I've got a dog he's like a two-ton frog – I call him some control," sings Roy on this whacked-out helping of vaudevillian end-of-the-decade silliness. Accompanied by Nicky on East End boozer meets end of Blackpool Pier piano (Harper spent his childhood living down the coast at St Annes On Sea on the Lancashire coast), it's reminiscent of the Bonzos fronted by a slightly unhinged George Formby or indeed any number of bands that dipped their paisley painted toes into that sound – from prime Small Faces and Kinks right through to XTC in their Dukes alter ego period. Session spotters are also treated to a dose of Clem Cattini on the drums.

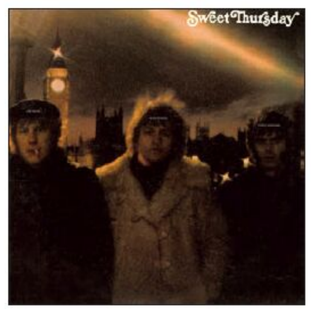
BREWER & SHIPLEY
Indian Summer
(From *Weeds*, Kama Sutra LP, 1969)



The albums of Kansas duo Brewer & Shipley are generally less than the price of pint of hipster craft ale these days and, in this writer's opinion, worth your attention. Their move from A&M Records found them taking their super laidback, almost wasted brand of folk-rock to the Kama Sutra label. Mike Bloomfield is here, as is our man Hopkins. 'Indian Summer' is one of their reflective sun-dappled gems that's imbued with equal amounts of hope and loss that gains momentum and almost threatens to "rock out", albeit in a very gentle manner. Tread carefully around their back catalogue and you shall be rewarded.

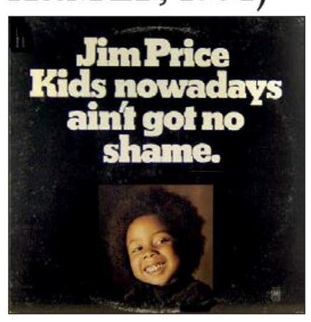
SWEET THURSDAY
Rescue Me
(From *Sweet Thursday*, Tetragrammaton LP, 1969)

In keeping with the era, the short-lived Sweet Thursday were – in their own small way – a supergroup of sorts. Featuring Hopkins



alongside frequent Cat Stevens collaborator Alun Davies and Jon Mark (later of Mark-Almond), they cut a non-LP 45 in 1968 followed by one lone album for Tetragrammaton in the US the following year. Side One closes with 'Rescue Me' (not the Fontella Bass tune), a slice of soulful, jazzy post-mod hipness. While the vocals are a slight let-down, the track features lashings of funky Hammond stabs and runs that sit somewhere between prime Graham Bond and early Colosseum.

JIM PRICE
Food For My Soul
(From *Kids Nowadays Ain't Got No Shame*, A&M LP, 1971)



Jim Price's highest profile gig in the early '70s was as a touring horn player with The Rolling Stones, though he did find time to record a solo album with his session musician pals, making good use of the Stones' mighty mobile studio and producer Jimmy Miller. Session musician pals Bobby Keys, Jim Keltner and Klaus Voormann all feature on this tough, soulful rock number. Jim Uribe's guitar opens the track and later takes a solo, but it's Hopkins' tasteful piano playing that subtly drives and underpins throughout. Always knowing what's needed, you can hear why he got the call-up.

CHEECH & CHONG
Basketball Jones Featuring Tyrone Shoelaces
(From *Los Cochinos*, Ode LP, 1973)

It's testament to the "anything goes" nature of the early '70s record business that weed-smoking comedy duo Cheech & Chong could find themselves in a session (in both senses of the word) with an ad-hoc band comprising George Harrison, Klaus Voormann, Jim Keltner, Carole King, Billy Preston, Darlene Love, Ronnie Spector and more for the only musical selection on their rambling, stoned third album of "non-music". Nicky's in there too, and even the dense, *All Things Must Pass*-style wall of sound (this time overseen by Lou Adler for his own Ode label) doesn't quite manage to submerge his contribution. Bizarrely, 'Basketball Jones' charted at #15, one place higher than 'Love Jones', the Brighter Side Of Darkness song it so shamelessly spoofs. "Somebody open a window, please!" S!

Contributors: Hugh Dellar, Duncan Fletcher, Andy Morten, Simon Norfolk, Andrew Ure

Visit thesessionmanfilm.com for details

"Do you like The Who?" Harold Bronson at the mic, May 1970; formative review subjects; *The Daily Bruin* in '69

Keep Off The Grass

Before co-founding Rhino Records in 1978, **HAROLD BRONSON** was a ravenous teenage music fan and commentator. In the third instalment of his eventful, star-studded memoirs, Bronson recounts his beginnings as a novice record reviewer in the UCLA's independent student newspaper *The Daily Bruin*

Wednesday, April 9, 1969

After reading a misguided appraisal of The Grass Roots' *Golden Grass* album in the UCLA *Daily Bruin*, I thought I could do better, and inquired at the paper's office in Kerckhoff Hall. I was told to come back when the music editor, John Mendelsohn, was in the office. When I returned, I was greeted by a tall figure dressed in a fringed buckskin jacket and jean bell bottoms. Waterfalls of dry, black hair framed a be-spectacled, dark face. I recognised him as the drummer in the band at the Hedrick Hall dance. At the time I thought he looked like John Sebastian of The Lovin' Spoonful and mugged like that group's Zal Yanovsky. John looks more like a rock musician than anybody else on campus. His first utterance to me was, "Do you like The Who?" I rendered a cautious, "Yes," thinking that was an odd opening question. (I learned

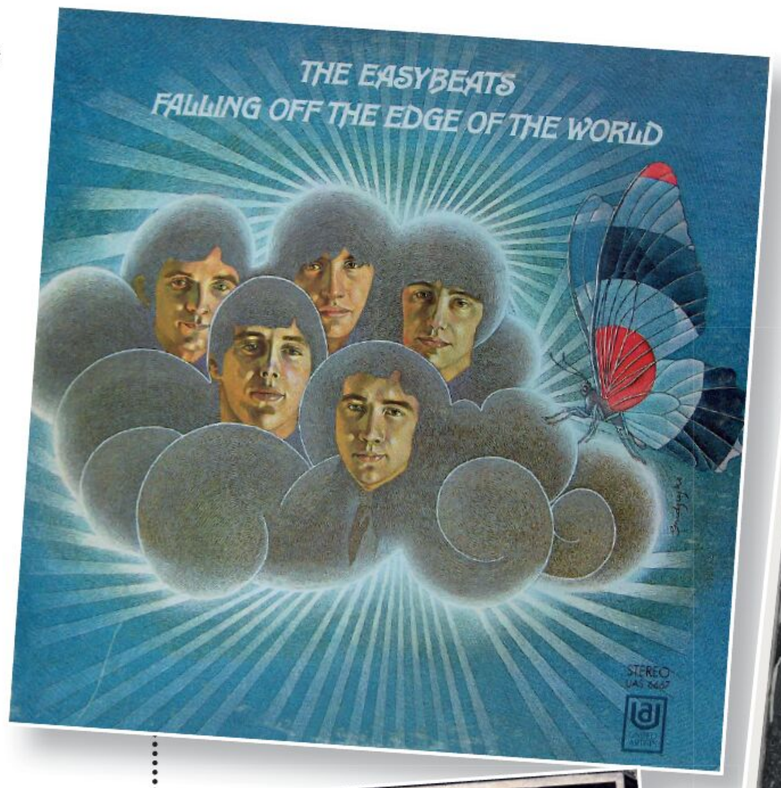
those who replied "No" didn't write last quarter.) He told me to pick any album I wanted and write a sample review. As I exited, he answered the ringing phone. "Bailey Drune".

Wednesday, May 21, 1969

As a freshman reading *The Daily Bruin*, I'm impressed with the high calibre of contributors to the arts sections, none more so than Mendelsohn. His wry prose and impeccable taste are head and shoulders above others writing about popular music. He championed *The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society*, Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks*, The Beau Brummels' *Bradley's Barn* and The Nice's *Ars Longa Vita Brevis* – none of which sold well enough to make *Billboard*'s album charts. He also gave good reviews to *The Beatles* (The White Album) and Mary Hopkin's *Postcard*. Here's his description of a recent Who performance in today's *Daily Bruin*: "Orange-haired and effeminate little Roger, standing dwarfed between the two dark and brooding guitarists, would hold his mike so daintily with just thumb and index finger that he gave the impression that it was made of fragile china. The next instant he would completely obliterate that impression by whirling it around his head by its cord or flinging it against Keith's bass drum. Entwistle would stand perfectly still, playing a strange percussive-sounding bass (that sounds more like three drum kits than a stringed instrument) and never changing his bored and mildly contemptuous expression, except to occasionally wince at his own strident falsettos. Moon, seating so effusively and directing such a manic attack on his drums that he covered everyone within a stone's throw with a flak of broken drumsticks and drops of perspiration, would embroider Townshend's powerful suspended-in-space chords with furious eruptions of staccato machine-gun fire on his 16-piece arsenal. And Townshend, ever grimacing and scowling, would land from his 10-foot leaps in prodigious splits to the accompaniment of gigantic abrasive chords, throw himself spread-eagled against his wall of amplifiers, or slash at his guitar with vicious upward arcs of his flagellating right arm."

Thursday, May 22, 1969

For my writing sample, I chose The Easybeats' *Falling Off The Edge Of The World* that I had bought at Crane's Records in Inglewood. When I handed John the



"Jim Bickhart is my new editor at *The Daily Bruin*. He is content to look like a hippie college student: jeans, checked flannel shirt rolled up on the arms, a book bag slung over his shoulder"

review, his brown, doggy eyes bugged out as he whirled around. "I remember when we played 'Friday On My Mind.' Denny and I used to sing, 'Dididididi...'" A week later, John patiently went through the review with me, explaining his comments. I thought I could write a critique better than the one I had read of The Grass Roots album, but I have a lot to learn. John helped me get my first review in shape. It ran today, on a marginal group named Crystal Mansion signed to Capitol Records.

Thursday, July 10, 1969

Jim Bickhart is my new editor at *The Daily Bruin*. Unlike Mendelsohn, who styled himself as a rock musician, Bickhart is content to look like a hippie college student: jeans, checked flannel shirt rolled up on the arms, a book bag slung over his shoulder.

With dark brown hair cascading over his forehead and strong facial features, he could pass for the third Everly Brother (on their *Roots* LP, a cover slick of which adorns our wall). Jim has a broad range of musical interests, championing country-rock and folk. As an indicator of how much he loves The Byrds, he titled his column "The Notorious Ramblin' Bros" after *The Notorious Byrd Brothers*. Since I'm writing for the paper, he suggested I spring for a subscription to *Rolling Stone*. I picked up the current issue (dated July 12) at the UCLA bookstore. The cover story on Elvis – for a hip music magazine? – plugging his *Change Of Habit* movie didn't interest me. But plenty did: a lengthy Pete Townshend interview, features on Jefferson Airplane and Rick Nelson recording new albums and news stories on Mick Taylor replacing Brian Jones in The Rolling Stones, the upcoming release of The Beatles' *Get Back* album, Blind Faith (a new supergroup comprising Eric Clapton, Ginger Baker, Steve Winwood and Ric Grech) debuting before 150,000 in Hyde Park, a premiere of The Doors' short film *Feast Of Friends*. I clipped the coupon on the back and mailed in $10.50 for a subscription and a copy of The Who's new album *Tommy*. If I bought it at Discount Records, the double album would cost me $6.98, so for $3.50 more I get a two-year subscription, a great deal.

Thursday, July 31, 1969

Fewer writers hang around *The Daily Bruin* office during the summer, so even though I had published only three record reviews, I got the nod to see Vanilla Fudge perform their upcoming album at the Factory, east of Beverly Hills. It was a buzz to see them play in a small club setting. I liked what I heard of *Rock & Roll*, but the title is a misnomer; it didn't sound like '50s rock and roll. Compared to the musical excess and exhibitionism that plagued their first four LPs, it's economical. Their musicianship is of a high calibre, and they still sound heavy. Eddie Brigati of The Rascals, sporting a beard, was in the audience. S!

Time Has Come Today: Rock And Roll Diaries 1967-2007 is published by Trouser Press

20 questions

Lunch Hour Pops

First and foremost, **BOB STANLEY** is a mega fan of pop music. Secondly, he just happens to be a musician, filmmaker, writer, album compiler and scholar.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS quizzes him about his activities during downtime from recording the new Saint Etienne album

"I was always intrigued by music from the past as much as music from the present. I never got the year zero mentality." Bob Stanley, pop student and scholar

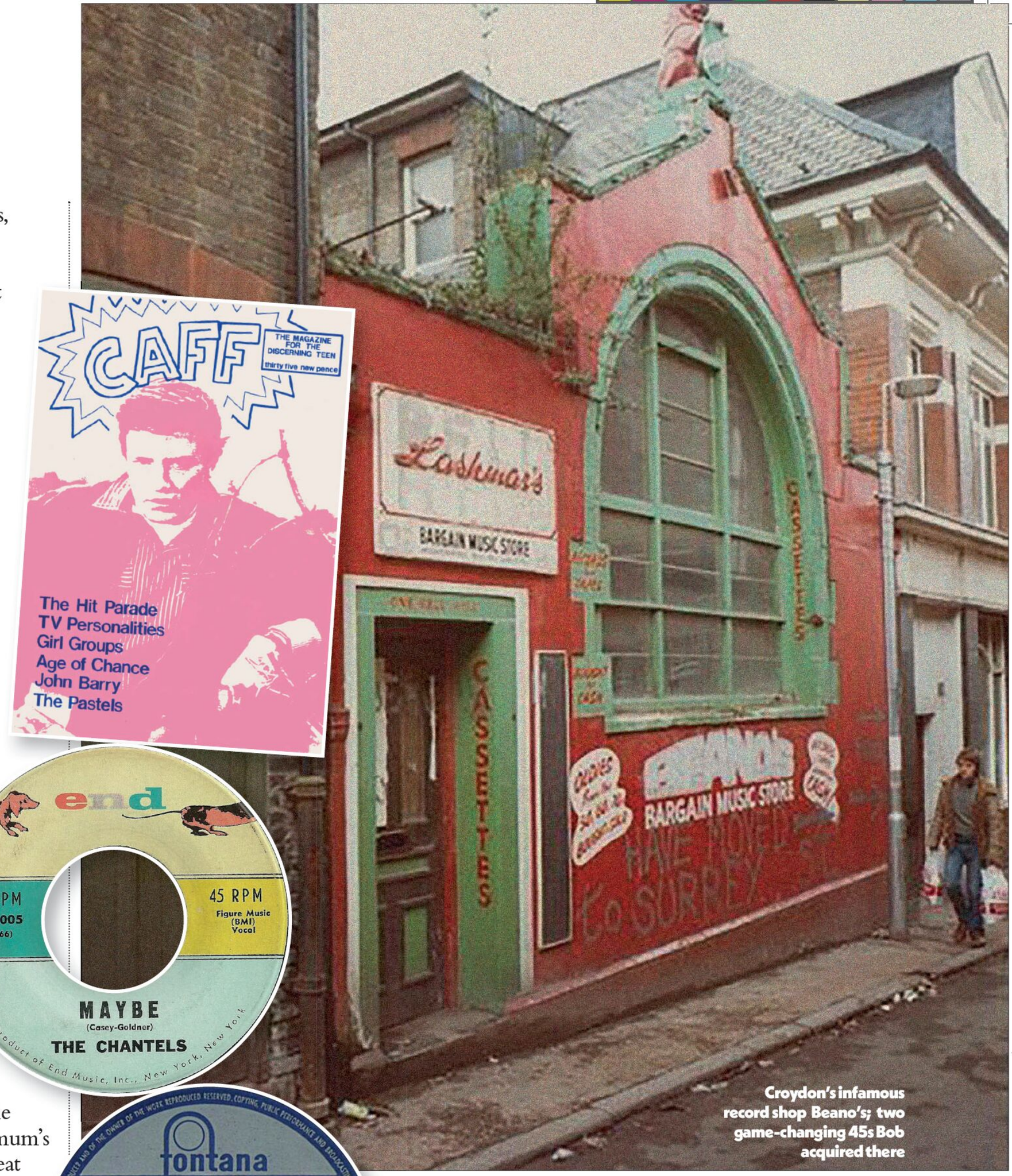
Shindig!: As a child of the '60s and '70s, what bands or singers first started your enduring fascination with music?
Bob Stanley: My mum and dad didn't have many records. A bunch of rock 'n' roll singles which they gave to me were 'Petite Fleur', 'Red River Rock', 'FBI' – but they didn't buy any records after they got married in 1961, apart from *The Graduate* soundtrack, oddly. Slade were probably the first group where I can remember being excited to hear whatever their next single was. I had a bit of a crush on Lynsey De Paul, though I wouldn't have known it was a crush at the time. I remember thinking Peter Skellern sang like a ghost, really creepy, and his name sounded like "skeleton"; Love Unlimited's 'Walking In The Rain' was eerie in a good way, the intro was magical. David Essex's 'Rock On' was probably the first time I remember thinking "How does it sound like that? What's going on?" and being aware of a "production".

I couldn't afford to buy many new records until I had a Saturday job, so was quite happy with hand-me-downs, or things I found in jumble sales and summer fetes – that's how I picked up John Barry's *Persuaders* theme. Albums were beyond my budget. I was given a couple of Tyrannosaurus Rex albums by my mum's work colleague Grizelda, which is a great name for a Tyrannosaurus Rex fan. So I was listening to *Unicorn*, which I loved, when I was 11 or 12, rather than *No More Heroes*. Grizelda also gave me a knackered copy of Davy Graham's first album, which I'm afraid I thought was quite boring. A couple of years later our next-door neighbours in Purley gave me a bunch of '60s albums including *The Who Sell Out* and *Village Green* – a mono *Village Green*! – which unsurprisingly I loved too. Trashed copies, but these were records I'd never heard before, and they were very important to me. I was always intrigued by music from the past as much as music from the present. I never got the year zero mentality – I mean, if you met someone who said they were only interested in art from the last four or five years, you'd think they were an idiot.

S!: Working in Surrey Street market gave you access to the vinyl treasure trove that was Beano's Records and it's ever-helpful guru Dave Lashmar. How key was the shop to your musical education?
BS: Really important. It's hard to recall now how hard it was just to hear records, so often you'd read about something and have to take a punt on it, thanks to a good review, or because you liked the artwork, or a song title. I did that with *Forever Changes* after I read a Love feature in *Record Collector*, and obviously didn't regret it. Anyway, if I heard something on the radio – like Aaron Neville's 'Tell It Like It Is' – I could just go into Beano's and ask for it. Once I asked for The Chantels' 'Maybe', which I didn't know then was a heavy London-American rarity, and the bloke behind the counter literally burst out laughing. But usually, they'd have a copy of whatever it was I asked for. It was an incredible shop.

S!: Any choice finds from their racks that helped shape your musical journey? How important were record shops generally to you in your formative years of musical discovery?
BS: Things I found there which blew my mind… I was just getting into British psych in 1984, thanks to Phil Smee's first *Rubble* albums, and someone tipped me off that they had Chapter Four's 'In My Life' for a tenner. Around the same time, I also found 'Grey' by The Hush and The Fruit Machine's 'I'm Alone Today'. All 10 out of 10 for me, and crazily cheap. The Hush single had some marks on it, so it cost me a quid! Mind you, I easily made up for the bargains by spending – I'd guess – thousands in Beano's over the years.

S!: What prompted you and Pete Wiggs to start a fanzine prior to becoming Saint Etienne? What acts did you write about?
BS: I never thought I'd be in a band,



Croydon's infamous record shop Beano's; two game-changing 45s Bob acquired there

"I never got the year zero mentality – I mean, if you met someone who said they were only interested in art from the last four or five years, you'd think they were an idiot"

mostly because I didn't have the patience to play anything. But I liked writing about music – I'd mimic the style of writers I liked, like Tom Hibbert at *Smash Hits*. So when Kevin Pearce's *Hungry Beat* came out I thought I'd like to have a go myself, with a couple of mates. That was a very influential fanzine, I think a lot of the C86-era fanzines took their lead from *Hungry Beat*. Kevin's a great writer, very stylish, I love his use of language. I probably bullied Pete into doing the first *Caff* with me in 1986. My writing in it was pretty basic, nothing I'm especially proud of. But it was the first opportunity I had to write about contemporary stuff like The Pastels, or Age Of Chance, as well as older acts like John Barry, who wouldn't have been written about in the weekly music papers at all.

***S!*:** As a pop journalist in the final hurrah of the weeklies what are your abiding memories of the late '80s? Culture was beginning to change with focus on the dance scene – ex mods, indie kids, football lads. Where were your favourite haunts?

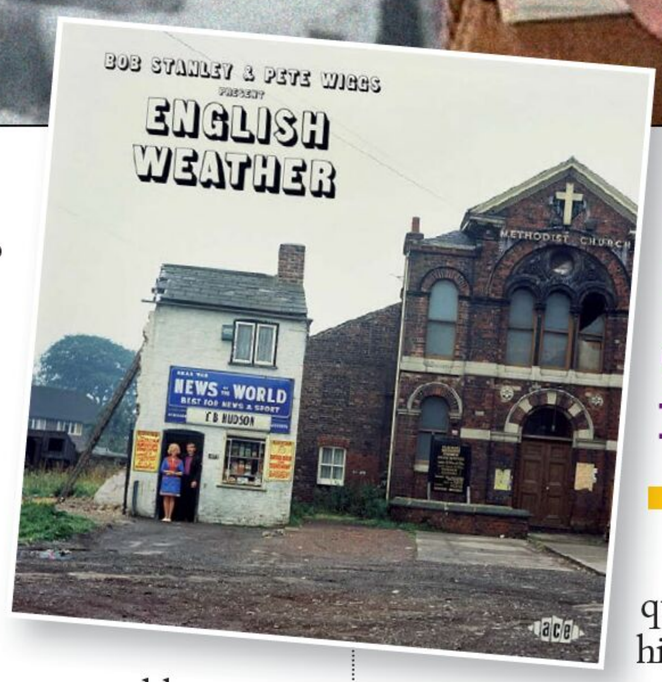
BS: I was always one for pubs more than clubs. House music, especially acid-house, was so exciting to me, as the mainstream '80s had mostly been pretty barren. Suddenly straights were getting into what was essentially pretty *avant* music, and that was such a sea change after the Go West era. At the same time, The Jesus & Mary Chain had set this thing in motion with their use of feedback, which mutated into shoegaze and dream-pop – not just Slowdive, but things like Galaxie 500, like a mellow antidote to the stuff coming from Detroit and Chicago. Somewhere in the middle were things like Model 500's 'Ocean To Ocean' and Balearic ambient "dance" stuff. It was an amazingly inventive period.

***S!*:** Saint Etienne's 1991 debut *Fox Base Alpha* was one of the most perfect records to sit at the crossroads of the collision between dance culture, pop and what was classed as "indie". You, however, also added a very British nostalgia to the mix, which set you apart and has meant that that record has aged very well. Did you see yourself as unique at the time? Did you ever receive any feedback from Neil Young regarding your version of 'Only Love Can Break Your Heart'?

BS: We just threw our tastes and our personalities into it. I can't imagine why anyone starting a group wouldn't do that – you're guaranteed not to sound like anyone else. So there were all the influences that Jon Savage mentioned in the sleeve notes, all mashed together. King Tubby and Big Boy Pete's 'Cold Turkey', and Fingers Inc's 'Distant Planet'. We didn't know any better! We always worried we'd be "caught out", like we weren't playing by some imagined music industry rule book. I only heard really recently that Neil Young approved of our cover – Randy Bachman had him on as a guest on his radio show a few years back. At the time, it seemed impossible to get

A young Pete Wiggs, Bob Stanley and Sarah Cracknell in 1991; the album that started it all
PHOTO: JOE DILWORTH

Bob, with the albums he put together for Sainsbury's; the brilliant and influential progressive-pop comp *English Weather*



in touch with him. We'd always wanted to know.

***S!*:** The '60s icons featured on the *Foxbase Alpha* artwork are captivating. If you were to redo the artwork now, 30+ years on, what other icons would you include and why?
BS: They'd probably be completely different. We didn't spend months thinking about it… it depended on the magazines lying around our flat that we didn't mind cutting up.

***S!*:** Along with your fascination with pop music, you're also interested in architecture and social history. What sparked that?
BS: Growing up in post-war Croydon was a big influence. It looked like a set from *Captain Scarlet* that you could walk around. It had a real sense of the future, at least when I was a kid. Crawley down the road was a new town, which intrigued me – the notion of building a whole community from scratch, it's a pretty noble idea. The social history thing just came from doing a particularly good history syllabus at school – I couldn't give a fuck about the history of kings and queens, but 19th century history about the Chartists and the Spenceans was fascinating, and it's all still very relevant. Some of my biggest heroes are people like Beau Nash, who effectively built Bath by convincing wealthy Londoners to come to the city and hand over their money at card tables! And Fergus O'Connor, the Chartist leader… Catherine Howe, who made the *What A Beautiful Place* album, is writing a biography of him at the moment. She's great too, properly inspiring.

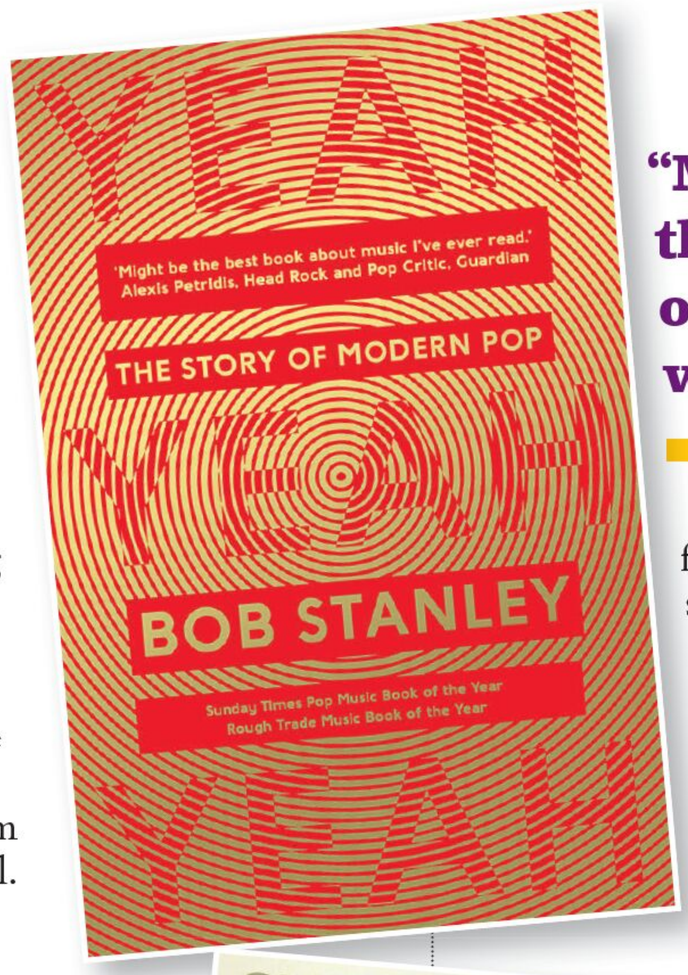
"British kitchen sink films were a big influence on us. I basically live on the set of *Billy Liar* these days – I go past Billy Fisher's house in Baildon all the time"

***S!*:** How has your career as a musician/producer influenced your writing about music?
BS: I don't think it has, to be honest. I suppose I've met people in the industry I'd probably never have got to meet otherwise, and on the whole they're a lot like characters from fictionalised pop movies – mostly grubby and arrogant and badly-informed, like Michael Medwin in *It's All Happening* more than straight-up evil like the industry characters from *Slade In Flame*.

***S!*:** Your short-lived series of vinyl compilations for the Sainsbury's Own Label were fantastic, taking in folk-rock, synth-pop, California soft-rock and a belting selection of Hank Marvin deep cuts. Was there anything else planned for the 'A Taste Of' range before it ended?
BS: We were going to do a Monkees comp. A lot of their unreleased-at-the-time things have still never been on vinyl. It seems such an obvious thing to do. Sainsburys effectively closed their vinyl and DVD departments, so that scuppered our plans. It was a real shame. But Pete Selby, who was running the department, now runs the Nine Eight publishing imprint, so it worked out in the end – he's doing some amazing books.

***S!*:** We're big fans of the themed compilations you've put together for Ace Records – both solo and in cahoots with your chums Pete Wiggs and Tim Burgess.

BS: It's a genuine dream job. I've been making cassette and CD compilations for friends since I was a teenager, spending whole weekends putting them together with Pritt stick and Letraset, and obviously I'd love to have put them on vinyl. Now I'm doing that for real.



"Most record shops are geared towards the '80s onwards now. My Bloody Valentine occupy the same space Gene Vincent did when I started hanging out at Beano's!"

***S!*:** When trying to describe compilations such as *English Weather*, *Occasional Rain*, *Paris In The Spring* or *Three Day Week*, one is inclined to put together a lot of adjectives, moods and references, but ultimately has to resign to the fact that those gorgeous cover photographs say it all better than any number of words ever could. Are you usually involved in artwork-related decisions for this kind of releases? And did the idea for a new compilation ever come from a visual, non-musical source?
BS: I always come up with the cover artwork and the fonts. They're so important in setting a mood. Neil Dell does a lovely job of laying them out, doing the gatefolds and the track listings. I grew up with the Edsel and Bam Caruso reissues in the early '80s which had quite dense, detailed sleeve notes, and label scans, and period adverts. They taught me a lot, so I purposefully have them in mind when I'm writing notes. I've definitely seen photos which have inspired ideas for compilations, but none of them have materialised yet! I think it's probably best to start with the music – you're always going to get visual cues from the music.

***S!*:** The films you've made with Paul Kelly are excellent. Music and image, style, design, architecture; all work so well together when artfully caught on film. What have been your personal cinematic/filmic touchstones?
BS: *Eraserhead* blew my mind. Me and Pete got it from a video shop. Any musician we liked from Ian McCullouch to Suggs had said it was their favourite film, so it felt like we were in on a secret. We were both taken to see *Kes* with our mums at the Redhill Odeon when were little, as a B-movie to *The Jungle Book*, believe it or not, so that was definitely formative. British kitchen sink films were a big influence on us. I basically live on the set of *Billy Liar* these days – I go past Billy Fisher's house in Baildon all the time.

***S!*:** You co-directed a short about jazz maverick Basil Kirchin, who is a most fascinating individual. How would you describe the man and his music to the uninitiated?
BS: He was one of the most inspiring people I ever met. He could explain how music was in everything, and how other music was inside *that* music if you took it apart by slowing it down or stretching it – he was doing this in the early '70s when the equipment to do it barely existed. His chord sequences are so peculiar that you can tell a Basil Kirchin arrangement at a hundred paces. The best place to start might be *Abstractions Of The Industrial North*, a De Wolfe library album. I heard some of it used in an episode of *Minder* recently, which was pretty surreal. My first copy of it was a minidisc that James and Trish from Broadcast made me. They had brilliant taste, put me on to a lot of things, like Comus, that I'd never heard.

***S!*:** Charting the development of popular music in two volumes – *Yeah Yeah Yeah: The Story Of Modern Pop* and *Let's Do It: The Birth Of Pop Music: A History* – was a wildly ambitious undertaking. How did you decide which songs, artists, genres and key moments to spotlight without ending up writing five million words?
BS: I had to do a pretty tight chapter breakdown for each book before I started. With *Yeah Yeah Yeah*, I thought I could only justify including people who a) had hits and b) took music forward in some way. So a lot of people I really like, from Gordon Lightfoot to Shocking Blue, didn't make the cut or it would have been four times as long and I'd have never finished it.

***S!*:** You write in *Yeah Yeah Yeah* about the last great period for mainstream pop music being the 2000s R&B explosion, and the experimental and inventive edge that super producers like Pharrell and Timbaland bought to the masses. In the 10 years since the book was published, has there been any artists/producers/musical movements that you think have been worthy successors?
BS: The two musical movements I've really loved in the last 10-15 years have been vaporwave and PC Music. Both of them have been regarded as jokes or not "real music" by a lot of people, which is usually a good sign. I did a book event with Simon Reynolds and I couldn't believe he thought vaporwave was rubbish. PC Music were like a parallel world, like a cross between Go Kart Mozart and Xenomania. Their sound is everywhere now but watered down. AG Cook's dad is Peter Cook, one of the main people behind Archigram, which was like a hyper-pop, parallel world architecture practice, so that all ties up neatly in my head.

***S!*:** You've written about record shops throughout your life. What, and where, are your current faves? We know you favour the small ones, full of tightly crammed racks and boxes of dusty old 45s. What is it about these small businesses untouched by time that still thrill you?
BS: I collect stuff from the '50s to the '70s quite heavily. I mean, I have a lot of records from earlier or later, but I'm more completist about the '50s, '60s and '70s, which isn't an especially healthy habit but there's not much I can do about it now. And because it's 2023, most record shops are geared towards the '80s onwards now. My Bloody Valentine occupy the same space Gene Vincent did when I started hanging out at Beano's! So, I'm only going to find second-hand records I really want in places like The Record Detective Agency in Palmers Green. Wall Of Sound in Leeds is the best one locally, for me, in that it's always piled with new stock, and there are things like John & Beverly Martyn acetates on the wall.

***S!*:** You've always championed London in music, film, and print. How do you think the city has changed over the years in which you have chronicled it?
BS: When we made *Finisterre* in 2002, we really wanted to shoot things that we knew were likely to disappear soon – the Italian cafes and greasy spoons, the guitar

Saint Etienne, 2023 model; Bob's history of pop; the *Finisterre* movie; Bee Gees are subject to Bob's thorough approach; Ace's *London A To Z* comp
PHOTO: ROB BAKER ASHTON

shops, odd bits of concrete architecture in the city. And of course, they have gone now! But so has much of the intangible character of places has changed. Crouch End, for instance, was a backwater of bedsits and quiet pubs when I moved to London in 1986 – I only went because the English Weather record shop was there, run by Steve Burgess, who was another great music writer. Then it became full of journalists and actors in the '90s and 2000s – there was a point where *Dr Who* (Peter Capaldi) and The Master (John Simm) both lived there! And now it's just full of people who work in the city and look stressed and cross all the time, and no one else can afford to live there. The change has really accelerated. That kind of demographic change has happened right across London. I live in Yorkshire now, it's much easier.

***S!*:** Kylie, The Aphex Twin, David Essex, PJ Proby – it's an eclectic selection of collaborators that mirrors your magpie approach to making pop music. Are there any artists you'd love to work with, or have tried and failed to court?

BS: Colin Blunstone politely turned us down, but usually I'm amazed at how amenable people are. You just have to avoid their managers and agents and talk to them directly. I'd love to have Hank Marvin play on something. I haven't asked. I want to ask Dean McPhee, who's my favourite current guitarist, his albums are just beautiful. I'm working on what exactly that could entail.

***S!*:** What projects are you currently working on?
BS: There's a new Saint Etienne album in the works. I'm starting a book on The Shadows, who I think need to have a more prominent place in history – their influence is insanely under-estimated, which is partly their fault, but anyway I think there's a great story to be told there. Bradford is going to be City Of Culture in 2025 so I'm pitching a couple of ideas, got my fingers crossed. And as long as Ace are happy to let me do compilations, I'll keep coming up with ideas. Working on one called *American Baroque* – there's an exclusive for you! S!

Contributors: Camilla Aisa, Duncan Fletcher, Fiona McQuarrie, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Morten, Paul Osborne, Martin Ruddock, Andrew Ure

London A To Z is out now on Ace. Bee Gees: Children Of The World by Bob Stanley is published by Nine Eight Books

RESTLESS SOUL

It's been a long road that **PETE MOLINARI** has travelled, from the mean streets of Kent to London, New York, LA and Rome, where his sixth album *Wondrous Afternoon* was recently recorded. As he prepares for the release of what could be his strongest and most soulful record yet, the singer, songwriter and musical poet tells **BEN GRAHAM** about his need to keep moving forward, and forging a creative triumph from the ashes of disillusionment.
Portrait by TAMARA KASULA

"I came to the States to tour with friends that I did some stuff with – The Black Keys and Jamestown Revival and a few others – and I kind of didn't go back," Pete Molinari says over a Zoom call from the Los Angeles home he shares with Mila, the Brazilian dancer he married just over two years ago. "I had some dates to come back to Europe with The Black Keys that ended up being cancelled in 2014, 2015, so I kind of hung on here. Some dates led to other dates as they do, and suddenly it'd been 18 months, and I was still living in New York, but the people I was working with were in LA…"

The Kent-born musician's influences had always been primarily American, with Dylan, Hank Williams, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and Billie Holiday all key touchstones. Indeed, Molinari made New York his base for two years when he travelled to the states after graduating from art school, living out his musical hobo fantasies but also woodshedding his developing talents and winning admirers and supporters among the folk-blues scene's old guard and beyond. But following *Just Like Achilles,* recorded in LA and rooted in Laurel Canyon folk-rock, Molinari has broadened his range still further with sixth album *Wondrous Afternoon,* combining the classic soul sounds of Motown and Burt Bacharach with a distinctly European romantic feel, influenced by the Italian film soundtracks and opera he absorbed growing up.

"The first things I heard musically were probably Maria Callas and Pavarotti, because that's what my dad loved," Molinari says. "And he loved film composers like Morricone and Umiliani, so they would have been there even before I'd ever heard Little Richard or Chuck Berry."

It was these composers, and their connection with Molinari's Italian heritage, that provided the first shared reference point with Luca Sapio, the new album's producer. The two had worked together briefly when Molinari was in Rome recording some radio shows for Rai, Italy's equivalent of the BBC, and in 2021, Sapio got in touch through a mutual friend to say that he'd love to work with Molinari on an album. A musician, songwriter and producer, in 2015, Sapio launched his own independent label, Blind Faith Records, specialising in soulful, analogue recordings often featuring his crack house band, The Italian Royal Family.

"He comes from a production background, but he's been an artist himself as well, and he had worked some sessions with Morricone and people like that, and obviously when he mentioned that name, I was very interested," Molinari says. "It was very much talk of Morricone and Piero Piccioni and Umiliani, and these were the names I'd grown up with my dad mentioning to me, watching movies and him telling me about these people. So that was a big deal for sure, because I was like, 'Oh wow, this is really interesting.' It's not just English and American influences."

The connection went even deeper, as Molinari recorded *Wondrous Afternoon* with The Italian Royal Family at The Sound

"If I can take a pair of shoes to get looked after and fixed 20 times, I'm much more a fan of that than I am of just buying any old trash." Pete styles it out

Pete on stage at Bumbershoot Music and Arts Festival in Seattle, Washington, September 2010; at The Cutting Room, New York, February 2015; a selection of albums so far

"I came to the States to tour with friends that I did some stuff with – **The Black Keys** and **Jamestown Revival** and a few others – and I kind of didn't go back"

Workshop, composer Piero Umiliani's old studio. "It's like a time capsule," he says. "If you look at pictures back then and you look at pictures now, it's the same. It's incredible how nothing's changed."

Sapio's other main point of reference was classic soul music – Motown, Stax, Burt Bacharach, Phil Spector – and he was convinced that although Molinari's previous recordings had drawn mainly on folk, blues, country and rock 'n' roll, the singer had it in him to make a full-on soul album. "He had more faith in me than I had at that moment," Molinari says. "Because although I hadn't done anything very soulful, as far as the Motown influence, he'd heard some of those recordings I'd done in the past, like 'It Came Out Of The Wilderness' and 'Lonesome For You' that had almost, dare I say, Orbison-esque vocals. I think from hearing those, he was like, I can get him to do something he doesn't know he can do."

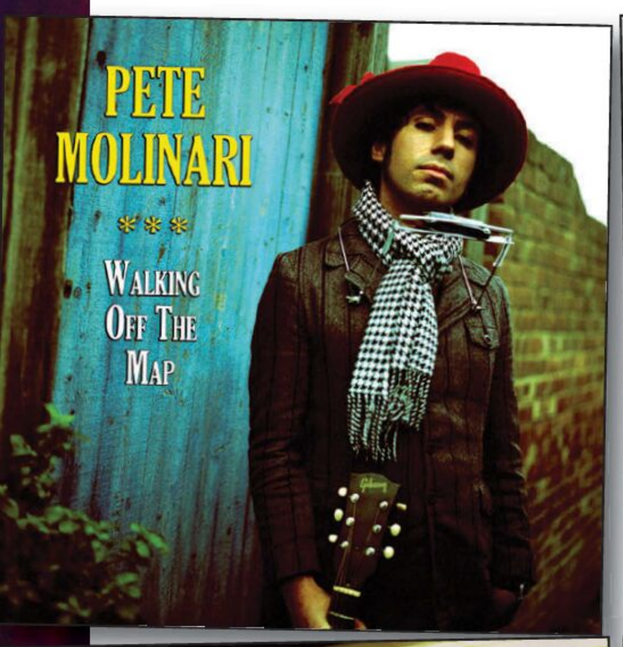
Immediately before arriving in Rome, Molinari had visited Brazil for the first time with his wife, and the music and rhythms of that country also make themselves felt on *Wondrous Afternoon,* most notably on the uptown soul of 'Always Letting Go'. "I was around all of these rhythms and seeing people dancing carnival and everything, and seeing her perform there was amazing for me," Molinari says. "And I think that really helped me, going from there to Rome. I was doing some recordings here in the States, in LA and in Nashville, and I wasn't happy because it just felt like more of the same of what I'd already done. I was ready for something new. I knew it would be a bit of a jump ahead, a leap of faith in a different direction, but it really worked."

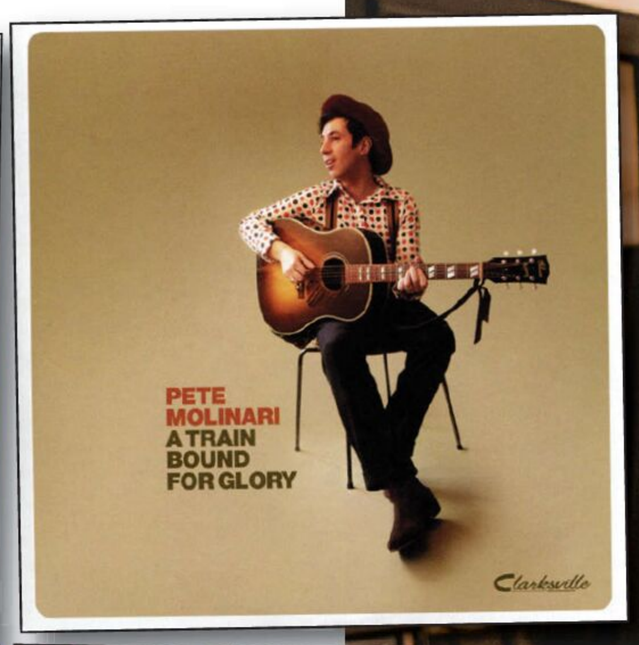
From the Curtis Mayfield groove of the title track to the devastating gospel-flavoured closer, 'Intermezzo #7', it's like the songs on *Wondrous Afternoon* are what Molinari's distinctive voice has been waiting for. Whether dropping into a seductive mid-range on 'You're Poetry To Me' or playing the laid-back storytelling crooner on stunning, cinematic western ballad 'The Rampaging Sons Of The Widow James', his vocals have never sounded better or more natural. Lead single, 'This Careless Heart' is a bridge from Molinari's earlier style, being irresistible pop-soul with a finger-snapping Brill Building chorus, while on 'Cezanne, Cezanne,' his folk-blues is whipped along by Dexy's-style horns. Motown-type arrangements featuring full brass and woodwind, Hammond organ and female backing vocals are in evidence throughout, resulting in an instant classic that should finally win Molinari the large international audience he deserves.

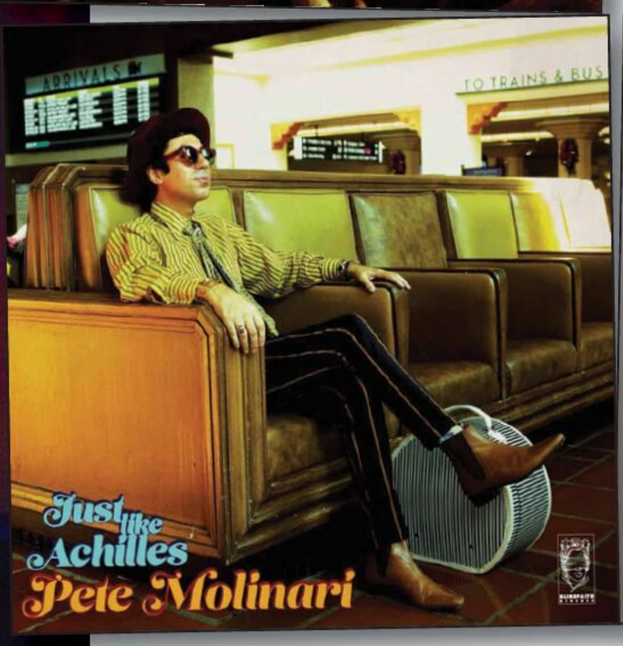
With an Egyptian father, a Maltese mother and an Italian heritage, Molinari grew up in a large working-class family in Kent's "Medway Delta", long the home of fiercely authentic English rock 'n' roll thanks to bands like The Prisoners and Thee Headcoats, led by iconoclastic artist, poet, author and musician Billy Childish. Molinari's debut album, 2006's *Walking Off The Map,* was recorded and produced by Childish in the latter's Chatham kitchen. "I'd grown up knowing Billy because I was a little kid when he was around town with his bands and stuff, whether that was Thee Headcoats or The Buff Medways. Some of those gigs were the first I ever went to when I was still at school. I used to go to his house and get some of his poetry books and we would hang out. When it came round to making a record, it only felt right that I would do it with him."

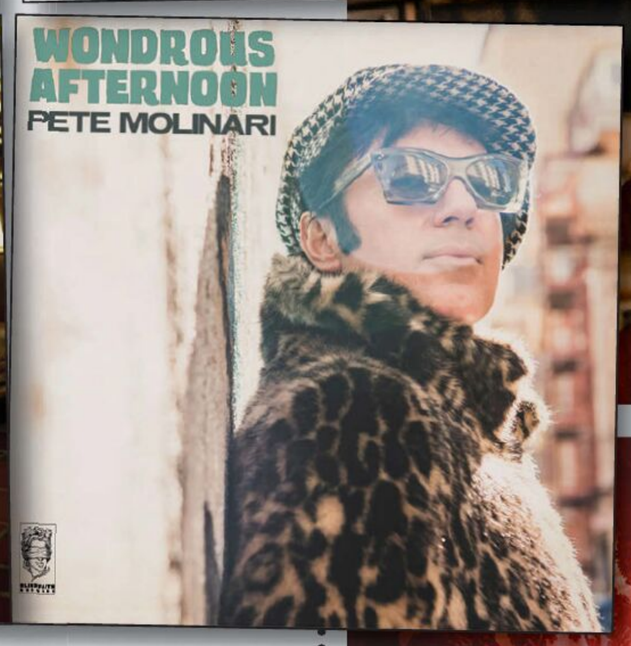
From working with Childish it was a logical next step to record at Liam Watson's legendary Toe Rag studios for the country-flavoured *A Virtual Landslide* (2008), which found Molinari backed by a full band for the first time. Third album, *A Train Bound For Glory* (2010) attracted plaudits outside of the lo-fi underground, and in 2013, Molinari performed at the Yoko Ono-curated Meltdown Festival, also singing John Lennon's 'Woman' and '(Just Like) Starting Over' with Ono herself.

Twenty-Fourteen's *Theosophy* was recorded at Boe Weaver's Studio Humbug on The Isle Of Wight with production and mixing from Liam Watson, Tchad Blake and Andy Weatherall, plus guests including Little Barrie, Carwyn Ellis, and The Black Keys' Dan Auerbach. Along the way, Molinari picked up some high-









Recording *Wondrous Afternoon* in Rome, 2023

profile fans, with Bruce Springsteen, Ray Davies and Bob Dylan queuing up to offer their compliments. Nevertheless, between then and now, casual observers would be forgiven for thinking it had all gone a bit quiet for Pete Molinari. From his perspective, this wasn't the case at all.

Recording sessions with the likes of Mitchell Froom (Crowded House, Suzanne Vega) and Lenny Waronker (Randy Newman, The Everly Brothers) led to Molinari hooking up with producer Bruce Witkin, a friend and former bandmate of Johnny Depp. "I wanted to do a record a little bit like *Theosophy*, but maybe a little less bluesy and more jangly and chiming, like The Byrds, mid-60s Beatles, Crosby, Stills & Nash," Molinari recalls. "And he got it, and we recorded pretty much a whole record, some in his studio and some in Johnny Depp's studio in Hollywood."

Meanwhile, a demo that Molinari had made with Mitchell Froom made its way to former 4 Non Blondes singer Linda Perry, now a successful LA songwriter and record producer thanks to her work with the likes of Pink and Christina Aguilera. In 2017, Perry had launched We Are Hear, an artist-friendly record label, publisher and management company, and wanted to sign Molinari to release the album he'd recorded with Witkin.

Perry set up a super-session in Capitol Records' legendary Studio A, inviting an A-list of guest performers to play Molinari's songs live, with a film crew on hand to capture the results. The guests eventually included Ronnie Spector, Jakob Dylan, Don Was and actress Evan Rachel Wood, plus Mike Garson and Gail Ann Dorsey from David Bowie's band. Molinari had his most commercial record yet in the can and everything seemed to be in place for a big launch into the heart of the US mainstream – and then the pandemic hit.

"I knew that the label was in a bit of a problem because they were talking to other labels about me," Molinari says. "They were either looking to do a partnership with a bigger label or send me to someone who could do something with me. And then they said, 'Look, we're gonna push it out digitally, and we'll do the physical thing when you start touring.'" This was in February 2020. Tour dates and festival appearances were scheduled for the summer but were pulled when the whole world shut down for two years. "So, I had this great record out and nothing was happening."

A fine pop-rock album, *Just Like Achilles* snuck out on Bandcamp in 2020 with no promotion while Luca Sapio negotiated to license a physical release on Blind Faith, which finally happened last year. "I just wanted to get on to the next record to be honest," Molinari says now. "I had a bitter taste in my mouth about it and couldn't listen to it for a while through the pandemic. But then I got the vinyl, and it was amazing to put it on and listen to this record. It was good to close the chapter on that and feel good about it finally and go on to this new recording."

Ultimately, for Molinari it's all about the music, working with the right people, and creating something with love and care that will last a lifetime. It's something he equates to his love of clothes, a passion that, like music, goes back to his childhood. "I think it probably stemmed from seeing photos of my dad and his brothers, these old black & white photos from the '50s and '60s with them always immaculately dressed," Molinari says. "And he said what you should do is get into handmade things. And I think that ingrained something in me that was like, 'Oh, a handmade guitar or a handmade suit or a handmade pair of shoes. A handmade recording session, you know?' I know computers have done a lot in the world, but I'm all for people being involved in stuff and if I can work with people and take a pair of shoes to get looked after and fixed 20 times, I'm much more a fan of that than I am of just buying any old trash. I'd rather wait to get the good thing."

Wonderous Afternoon is out now on Blind Faith

COMING OFF

"In Birmingham, as in Detroit, the diversionary power of music is intensified." Locomotive in 1968. L-R: Norman Haines, Bob Lamb, Bill Madge (front), Mick Taylor, Mick Hicks

F THE RAILS

Following their freak 1968 ska hit 'Rudi's In Love', Birmingham's LOCOMOTIVE veered off course, smashing through psychedelia and jazzy, doomy prog before grinding to a undignified halt.

As stable-mates Black Sabbath and former personnel steamed to international success with Traffic and Led Zeppelin, a solitary, highly regarded album marked the end of the line for the group fronted by Jim Simpson and Norman Haines.

SEÁN CASEY retraces the journey. "Birmingham always seems to have great bands but we're not very good at shouting about them"

If you attended a wedding in the West Midlands in the 2000s, there's a chance – albeit a slim one – that the occasion's soundtrack was provided by a man who achieved chart success, reportedly declined an invitation to join Black Sabbath and recorded an album at Abbey Road Studios with the producer of Bowie's 'Space Oddity'. Prior to the eight-week chart stay of 'Rudi's In Love', Locomotive had plugged away on the UK's live jazz scene for three years under the direction of bandleader and trumpeter Jim Simpson.

Formed in Birmingham as The Kansas City Seven, the group functioned as a musical nursery for the region's finest musicians with early line-ups featuring Simpson alongside a pre-Traffic Chris Wood, future Spooky Tooth drummer Mike Kellie, Spencer Davis's Pete York and Wizzard's Mike Burney.

"We were playing sort of Kansas City jazz-blues. It's where the [Count] Basie Band came out of and people like Pete Johnson, Jimmy Rushing and all those guys," Simpson tells *Shindig!* "As [jazz musician] Humphrey Lyttleton once said, none of us had been further west than Weston-Super-Mare!" Chris Wood recalled his time with the group in an interview for *Rolling Stone*. "We'd do the occasional wedding reception, club social, British Legion meeting on Saturdays. You'd have to play standard waltzes and foxtrots, but we tried to do as much jazz as we could get away with."

At The Elbow Room in Aston – a popular hangout for Midlands musos – the renamed Locomotive refined their repertoire and gained studio exposure at Zella Records across town. "We were 'The Elbow Crowd'," Kellie later remembered. "We'd all jam with pals like Jim Capaldi, Stevie Winwood and Chris Wood, who was by now with me in The Locomotive."

With Wood and Kellie departing for Traffic and The VIPs (soon to be renamed Art), Simpson assembled a new line-up including former guitarist Norman Haines, saxophonist Bill Madge and drummer 'Mooney' Mezzone. As Locomotive ditched jazz for a contemporary soul sound, Haines switched from guitar to organ.

They worked the live circuit performing up to 300 gigs a year, including frequent appearances at Soho's Flamingo Club where they supported Georgie Fame, Chris Farlowe and The Animals. After seeing the five-piece play, journalist and deejay Tony Hall signed them to his new company Tony Hall Enterprises (THE) and struck a deal with CBS off-shoot Direction. They were among popular company. As one of the first independent promotion companies in the UK, THE was responsible for plugging records by Jimi Hendrix and Dusty Springfield.

Simpson borrowed a former ambulance then-tour-bus and Locomotive returned to London to record their first single 'Broken Heart', a brilliant slab of Motown-inspired Brummie soul written by Haines. Mirroring Detroit's manufacturing fall from grace, Birmingham's industrial decline was underway by the time of the single's release in late 1967. Music writer Ben Edmonds once described the parallels. "In Birmingham, as in Detroit, the diversionary power of music is intensified simply because the need for diversion is that much stronger; the measure of music becomes its ability to carry the listener beyond whatever reality is grating a little too harshly."

While showcasing his vocal range and early songwriting capability, not everyone was a fan. "The good thing about 'Broken Heart' was that it was the last record to be played on *Jukebox Jury*," Haines remembered. "The bad thing was – they voted it a 'miss'. Katy Boyle said that this was one locomotive that should never have left the station!"

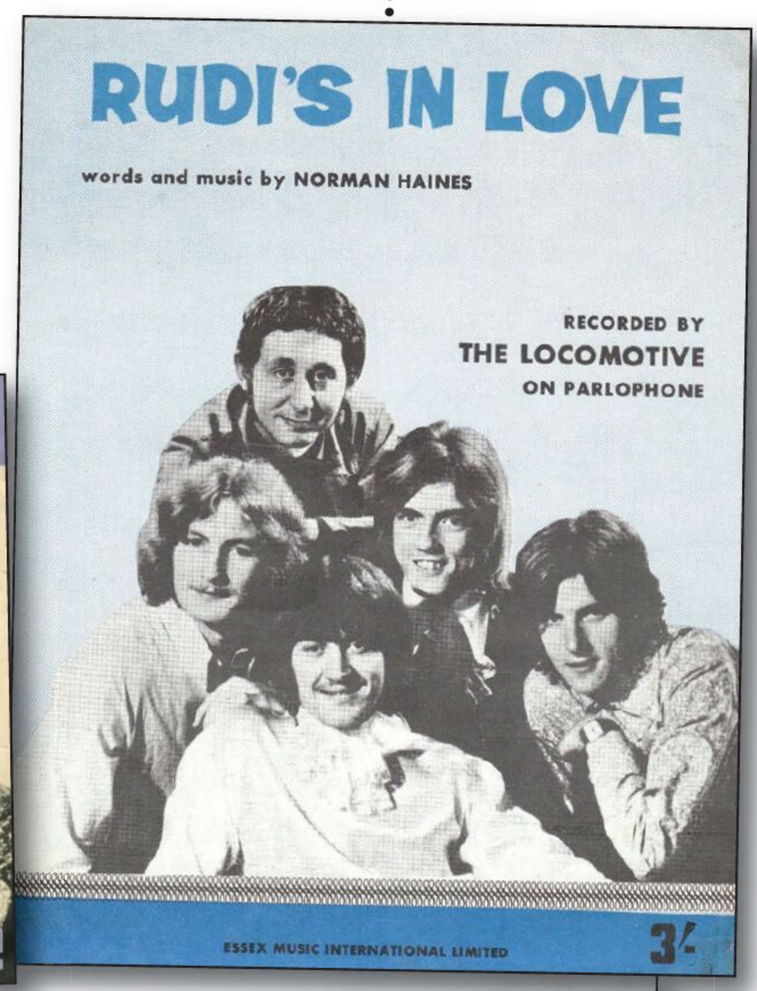
The B-side saw Locomotive move further from jazz and soul with a cover of Dandy Livingstone's rocksteady classic 'Rudy – A Message To You'. Haines was exposed to ska when working in a Smethwick record shop due to the town's West Indian population. Absurdly, as Locomotive were embracing one of the many benefits of the region's multiculturalism, just months earlier Tory MP for Wolverhampton, Enoch Powell, delivered his incendiary and shameful "Rivers Of Blood" speech in Birmingham.

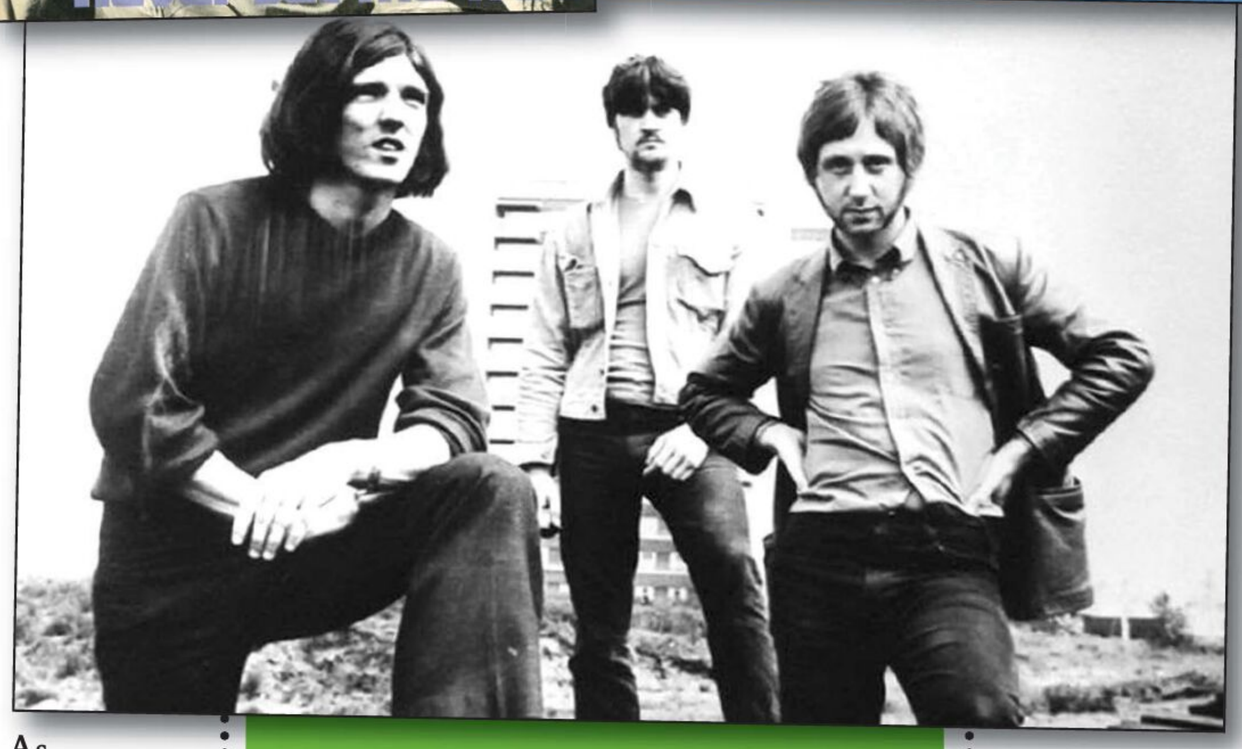
Haines explained the background to writer Sid Smith in 2010. "I wanted to bring in ska and Blue Beat into the set because I'd heard a lot of that when I ran a record shop before going pro. We used to get the Blue Beat records, things on the Island label, Prince Buster, various Jamaican labels."

Simpson thought they were onto something. When Haines unveiled a new song, he was impressed. "It struck me straightaway that it might just be the hit song we had been looking for," he wrote in his memoir *Don't Worry 'Bout The Bear*.

Teaming up with producer and voice of Bowie's 'The Laughing Gnome', Gus Dudgeon, the band recorded 'Rudi's In Love' in the summer of '68. Polarising to this day, it's often viewed as a track that occupies a Venn diagram of tribute, sequel and cultural appropriation. (In the summer of 2023, this writer was eavesdropping in a Midlands record shop when owner and customer discussed a recent pub night, the latter describing the evening's deejays with the dismissive comment, "They were playing all that 'Rudi's In Love' stuff".) Nonetheless, it was a hit, soundtracking nights in dance halls across the country and peaking at #25.

As the press honed in on the group's adopted genre, Haines offered a glimpse into the future. "When we play dates, we





"'Broken Heart' was the last record to be played on Jukebox Jury. The bad thing was – they voted it a 'miss'. Katy Boyle said that this was one locomotive that should never have left the station!"

Before they were so Rudy interrupted; the single and sheet music; Hicks, Haines and Lamb in 1967 (opposite)

still use ska numbers, mainly as a build up to the hit record," he told *Record Mirror* in November '68. "But we shall be playing more progressive material in the future."

Simpson, however, was keen to strike while the ska iron was hot. The band went back to the studio with new drummer Bob Lamb, who replaced Carl Palmer (who had briefly taken over from Mazzone) to record the festive single 'Rudi The Red Nosed Reindeer', complete with a Blue Beat rendition of 'White Christmas' sung by Lamb on the flip.

It was the first release on Simpson's Big Bear label – a company still in existence today and named after John Peel's nickname for Simpson. The band was billed under the pseudonym The Steam Shovel owing to contractual obligations with their new label, EMI subsidiary Parlophone, which rejected the song. It was distributed by Island – one of the labels Haines drew inspiration from during his time behind the counter.

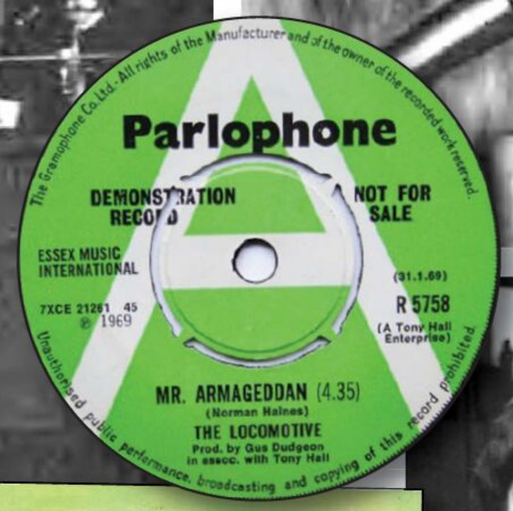
It wasn't only EMI Simpson was battling, as he recalls. "Tony Hall and Norman fought against it and persuaded EMI not to release it, so there I was: stuck with the recording. What do you do? Well, you set up a record label, I guess! So, I did and that's how Big Bear started – just to release that one record." Focusing on his new venture – and forced to redesign its logo upon a strong legal suggestion from Disney – Simpson bolstered the label's roster to include the early Bolan-esque acoustic troop Tea & Symphony, The Bakerloo Blues Line (whose David "Clem" Clemson would later form Colosseum) and Earth, who would famously rechristen themselves Black Sabbath.

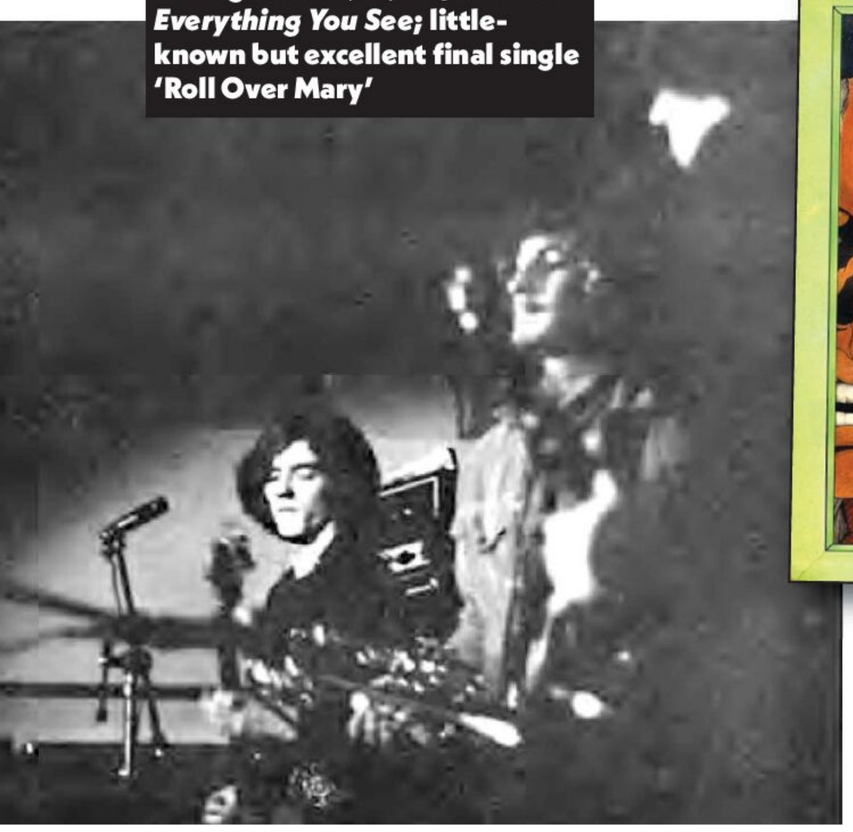
To concentrate on harnessing Birmingham's burgeoning grass roots scene, Simpson left the band he'd formed, acting as Locomotive's manager from thereon, bringing in trumpeter Mick Taylor as his replacement. To give his acts a live platform, Simpson hosted a weekly club night. Held at The Crown on Station Street in Birmingham, Henry's Blueshouse was considered one of the first progressive nights outside London.

In addition to touring groups passing through, Robert Plant and John Bonham – natives of neighbouring Wolverhampton and Redditch – jammed there regularly. Bonham even joined the band for a brief period prior to Lamb's tenure. "We had a good spell when John was with us," Simpson says. "He told us he was going to leave, and I said, 'What are you going to do?' He said, 'I'm going to join a band called Led Zeppelin,' and I said, 'They'll never get anywhere with a name like that!'"

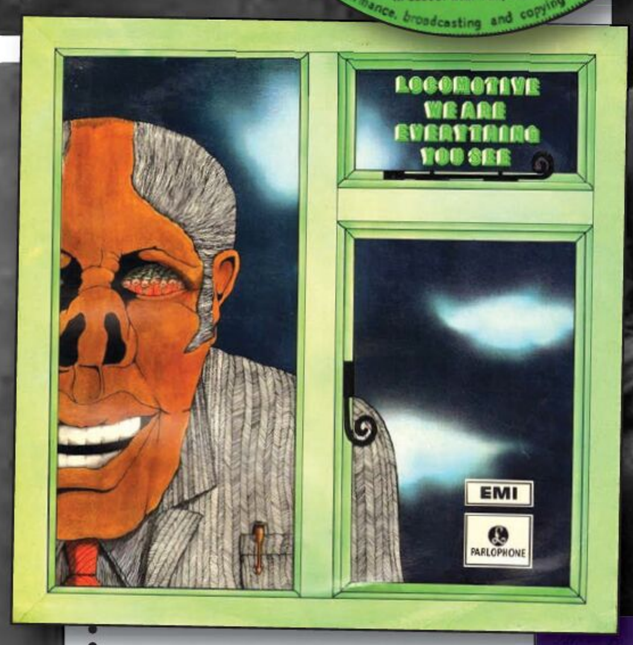
Leveraging the buzz of the club night, Simpson devised "The Big Bear Ffolly", a package tour that saw all three acts perform across the UK. It culminated in a performance at London's Marquee Club and the tour name would later be used for a Bakerloo song title.

With the guitar-less Locomotive – then comprised of Haines, Lamb, Madge, Taylor and bassist Mick Hincks – signed to Parlophone, Simpson struck deals with Harvest for Tea & Symphony and





"No guitars!" Locomotive on stage in late 1968; '69's 'Mr Armageddan' *(sic)* 45; *We Are Everything You See*; little-known but excellent final single 'Roll Over Mary'



Bakerloo and negotiated Black Sabbath's contract with Vertigo. Remarkably, the same week 'Paranoid' reached #2 in the UK charts in '70, Simpson was dropped as Sabbath's manager. He discovered he'd been fired upon receipt of legal papers advising that his services were no longer required.

Locomotive's next stop was Abbey Road to record a new single. As told to Smith – and forewarned by Haines – it would take inspiration from a different borrowed genre. "The other guys in the group had started listening to things like The Band, and Bill Madge came up with an album by The Electric Flag and said, 'We don't want to do any more ska. We want to be doing more of this kind of music.' I listened to some of the music the others had suggested, and I became converted. I started writing material in a completely different vein."

Simpson remembers the inspiration being closer to home. "The moment Norman Haines told me he'd decided to go off on this [progressive] excursion was when he first heard 'A Whiter Shade Of Pale'. He'd always cite that as his turning point." Even so, American influences were on full display during a session for BBC Radio in December '68. Alongside 'Rudi' and new single 'Mr Armageddon', they performed Dylan's 'I Am A Lonesome Hobo' and Spirit's 'Fresh Garbage' (coincidentally, and famously, Bonham's new outfit would later be sued by Spirit for similarities to their song 'Taurus').

The latter three live recordings are found on Maida Vale's 2019 compilation *British Psychedelic Rock At The BBC 1967-1969*, with Brian Matthew introducing the new song as "the modern sound of The Locomotive" written by singer "Graham Haines".

Those US influences would be borne out further on the resulting album, completed over the following months, which includes a medley of 'Coming Down' and 'Love Song For The Dead Che' taken from The United States Of America's self-titled debut. Though the stimulus may have been stateside, in keeping with an army of UK bands of the time, this inspiration would be twisted, tangled and reshaped until it had a uniquely British sound, betraying its transatlantic blues-beginnings in favour of vaudeville jazz, gothic imagery, Dickensian tales and – most tellingly – English psychedelia.

Spawning the album's title, *We Are Everything You See*, 'Mr Armageddon' was released on 31st January '69, the day after The Beatles' rooftop performance. It was a radical departure from the goodtime, dance-along ska the band was known for, its place cemented as an underground psychedelic rock classic following its inclusion on numerous compilations over the years. Contrary to common opinion, it wasn't a complete flop. Though it struggled to place in the charts, it was better received by the press than it is by Simpson. "'Mr Armageddon' is a really important record… but it's not what I'd play for fun."

The rest of the album follows suit, substituting the love-struck lyrics of 'Broken Heart' and upbeat optimism of 'Rudi' with bitter sarcasm, theatrical slights and stark paranoia exemplified by songs such as 'Nobody Asked You to Come' and Taylor's 'Now Is The End, The End Is When', which transitions back and forth from jazz to psychedelia, driven by Lamb's incredible drumming. Gone are the rocksteady vibes, replaced with swirling wah-wah Hammond, distorted vocals, orchestral motifs and a recurring Elizabethan skit entitled 'The Loves Of St Augustus Abbey' – a play on producer Dudgeon's name. "We were basically rehearsing and writing music in the studio," Haines told Smith. "Gus would get involved by suggesting that we make one a bit longer or do a part like we'd done in another song."

The material paints chief songwriter Haines as a tormented soul, deceived and disillusioned – whether by personal relationships or with an industry he believed owed him more ("Thank you very much for your indifference to the debit that is due"). 'Lay Me Down Gently', however, exhibits Haines' vulnerability ("and throw me in the cupboard like so many toys before"), his soulful refrain underpinned by stirring piano and brass. Brimming with regret, 'You Must Be Joking' tells the tale of a partner dealing with the guilt of serial infidelity and self-loathing. The protagonist – unable to forgive himself

anymore – concludes the song with suicide, its final act denoted by a farcical yet inevitable brass-line before drawing to a frantic close via repeating organ stabs. The Hincks-penned and sung 'Rain' is a further example of a tight and creative band collaborating with a producer in full command of the studio.

Today, the album is widely considered a masterpiece with original copies fetching corresponding sums. It's difficult to argue with this status. The band's – and specifically Haines' – genius is clear; his spikey lyricism in full-flow and Hammond talent reminiscent of peak-era Winwood or Brian Auger (check 'Time Of Light And Darkness').

Although the album's stitching is brilliantly cohesive, its recording was anything but convivial. Haines' aptitude for disputes with band members, managers and collaborators was also peaking. "I got fed up of fighting him," Simpson says. Appointed to oversee arrangements, composer Paul Buckmaster was replaced by Tea & Symphony's Nigel Phillips following disagreements with Haines (he later challenged Phillips' co-writing credits on six of the album's 13 tracks).

Midway through the sessions, the band fractured. Madge and Taylor were first to exit, forcing Dudgeon to bring in a new brass section. Satirically credited on the sleeve with "vocals, piano, Mellotron, harpsichord" and "togetherness", Haines himself quit soon after, leaving EMI with an unmixed album and no band.

Reportedly declining an invitation to join Black Sabbath, Haines penned material for the band, including 'When I Came Down' and 'The Rebel' – two early recordings now part of folklore among Sabbath aficionados. Though Haines' invitation to join and writing credit for 'The Rebel' are strongly contested by Simpson, in 2008 Tony Iommi responded to demos of both leaking online. "We didn't write those songs. They were written by a chap named Norman Haines."

Owing to the surprise nature of *We Are Everything You See* and a dismantled band unavailable to support promotion, EMI temporarily shelved it when Dudgeon handed over the final mix in mid-69. Upon its eventual release in February '70, it was immediately out of step with the moving times; its semi-conceptual leanings inspired by Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures At An Exhibition* suite landing two years after *SF Sorrow*, and three after *Pepper*. Time had moved on. Concept was passé, lavish orchestration and psychedelia was out in favour of stripped-down heavy-rock. Its artwork – straddling psych and prog – didn't help already confused audiences.

Smith – who counted Madge as a bandmate later in the decade – explains, "There's a slew of albums recorded in '69 but released in '70 and they're just missing the boat. They're ever so slightly too late. A fraction earlier and it could've worked but it just didn't. I think that's definitely the case with Locomotive."

"There's nothing wrong with entertaining people. People danced to us, and they liked what we did. It was terrific. And suddenly, they weren't dancing because it was doom-laden"

Fans of the band's ska period rejected the new material and those ordinarily partial to psychedelia discounted them due to their prior pop status. 'Rudi' had become a hanging albatross. Simpson disliked the album too. "For me the importance was good music, properly played, imaginative but entertaining. There's nothing wrong with entertaining people. I loved being part of Locomotive. People danced to us, and they liked what we did. It was terrific. And suddenly, they weren't dancing because it was doom-laden."

To fulfil obligations to EMI, Lamb and Hincks recruited Keith Miller and John Caswell and stumbled on as Locomotive for another single, the *Shindig!*-approved 'Roll Over Mary'/'Movin' Down The Line', before renaming themselves The Dog That Bit People at Simpson's suggestion. The name – borrowed from American writer James Thurber – is one of his few regrets. Produced by Simpson at Abbey Road with George Harrison in a nearby studio, its country-rock style is in stark contrast to Haines-era Locomotive – no more so than on the fittingly named 'Mr Sunshine'.

Meanwhile, Haines formed Sacrifice with Andy Hughes, Jimmy Skidmore and Neil Clarke and also returned to Abbey Road, now with Hall solely at the helm. The subsequent album *Den Of Iniquity* (a reference to a Birmingham watering hole) dispensed of the brass-lined arrangements for a proggier sound. "I think what *Den Of Iniquity* is about, if it's about anything, is 'Alright, let's give this heavy stuff a shot and see if it works,'" says Smith.

On top of a reimagined version of 'Mr Armageddon' released as the B-side of the title track, it includes the one undisputed song Haines wrote for Sabbath. By the time of its issue, at the suggestion of Parlophone, the group had been renamed The Norman Haines Band (erroneously printed as Haynes on single 'Daffodil'). It didn't help. *Iniquity* also failed to sell, in part due to another garish cover, this time courtesy of a drawing by German illustrator Heinrich Kley, which ultimately dissuaded retailers from stocking the album. "When it was first released in '71, it 'escaped'," Hall said in '93. "No marketing. No promotion. Nothing. It was just dumped." A further single was released under the alias Avalanche but didn't hit the mark either.

After Hall arranged for his publishers to pay off Haines' organ, which was set for repossession, Haines returned to the studio one last time to record the fervent 'Give It To You Girl' and its B-side 'Elaine' – an ode to his wife with whom he remained until his passing in July 2021. Released bearing his own name in July '72, as with most of Haines' output since 'Rudi', it came and went without a whimper. Disenchanted, he returned to his former life working at The General Post Office. "I had a drop in my self-esteem because of the loss of the dream," he rued in 2011. Over the next 50 years, he played locally and in later years formed Norman Haines Blueskool, a wedding and function band.

After joining The Idle Race and Steve Gibbons Band, Bob Lamb maintained the regional connection to ska and reggae, going on to produce UB40, and Duran Duran. Simpson remains at the helm of Big Bear today. As well as publishing bi-monthly magazine *The Jazz Rag* and curating The Birmingham Jazz & Blues Festival – an event approaching its 39th year – he relaunched Henry's Blueshouse in 2019.

We Are Everything You See and *Iniquity* were reissued by Esoteric in 2010 and 2011. Smith interviewed Haines for the liner notes, and while the musician's contender-esque disappointment was evident, in later years he found solace in the renewed interest in Locomotive's debut. "He was really pleased that people would contact him out of the blue and sing the album's praises. It felt for him like vindication that the album was good, and that it was validated by other people."

Standing at the geographic and cultural heart of the late '60s – and the shift from jazz and blues, through to the progressive underground – Locomotive attracted and nurtured some of the country's brightest talents, providing both the opportunity and network from which they spring-boarded.

It remains a source of great pride to the group's founder and unfailing engine, Simpson. "We had so many terrific musicians in Locomotive throughout the years. Really, we were like a musical kindergarten."

Dedicated to Norman Haines. With special thanks to Jim Simpson, Sid Smith and Sally Haines, and to reader Stuart Robertson for concurrently connecting the dots

In Betwee

He had a unique talent that placed him in the same breaths as **Davey Graham** and **John Renbourn**, and his debut album remains supernaturally strong, yet **Dave Evans** never managed to break out of the provincial folk scene.

"He just exuded a love of life and love of music." Dave Evans and friend photographed for the cover of *The Words In Between*, 1971

o Days

Maybe, at 30, he was too old when he started, and too young when he released his fourth and final album aged only 35. Maybe playing a challenging instrumental on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* wasn't the smartest promotional move. Or maybe he simply wasn't interested in fame.

Michael Björn talks to friend and musician **Steve Tilston**, and producers/label owners **Stefan Grossman** and **Ian A Anderson** to discover more about an unsung troubadour.

Portrait by Richard Walker

PHOTO BY JO GEDRYCH

Dave at The Stonehouse Folk Club, Bristol, circa 1972

Born in Bangor in Wales in December 1940, Dave Evans joined The Merchant Navy after school, and spent five years as Third Mate on a cargo ship slowly traversing the high seas. He went to Loughborough Art College in '63, where he would later also run a local folk club.

"The first time I saw Dave he was haranguing the audience, singing about this murderer who's about to be hanged," remembers Dave's early musical companion and friend Steve Tilston. "I thought, what on earth is this?" Dave was performing 'Sam Hall', a traditional song initially released as a single by Tex Ritter back in 1935 and recorded by Johnny Cash in '65. But now it was '67, Steve was 17 and the nine years older Dave Evans was about to book Steve for a performance at the folk club. "We just hit it off. I met some limitless guy who had literally been around the world. He had these great tales…" says Steve. "We were both half Welsh as well. My dad's Welsh. And I think his mum was Welsh."

Another early favourite song was 'Mole's Moan' by American folk-blues singer and guitarist, Geoff Muldaur – although Dave called it 'Monk's Moan' and had heard it in Morocco. "David made it into this *tour de force*, and it was just fantastic." When Steve turned 18 he left home and moved in with Dave and his girlfriend Barbara in their flat on Cobden Street. "We spent the whole-time playing guitars and cooking curries," remembers Steve who started practicing guitar aged 12 and learnt curry cooking from his dad. But although Dave was older, he first picked up a guitar in his 20s, so they were both equally unseasoned.

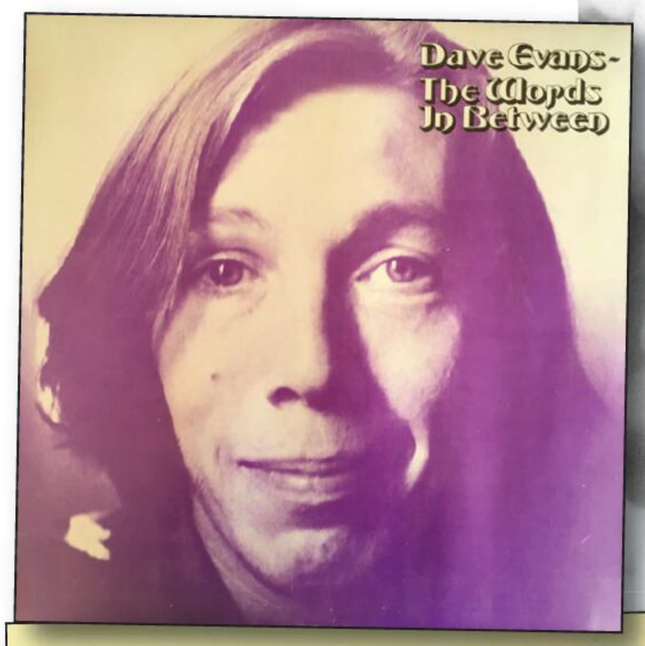
There were many clubs in those days, and they would tour Leicestershire down to Northamptonshire and up to Nottinghamshire as a duo, with Dave taking on lead guitar. Dave had the rare ability to immediately make friends wherever he went. "He just exuded a love of life and love of music," says Steve. "Quite a special guy." Dave soon developed a large network of contacts, and through those heard there was a competition at The Nottingham Playhouse. "There was every kind of folk singer; and then there was Dave and I," says Steve. "We came last. But this guy came up and said we should have won. It was Wizz Jones!"

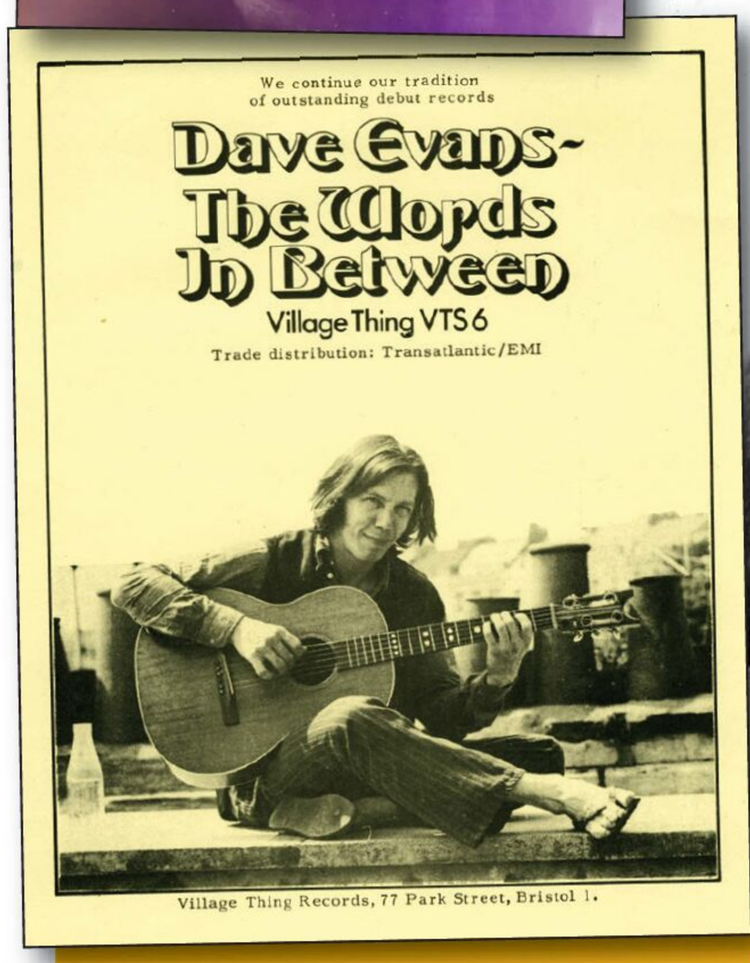
With financing from his mother, Dave had set up a pottery after having finished art college. But in '69, he decided to make his own guitars, and borrowed John Bailey's well-known book about guitar building at the library. "Whenever Dave turned his hand to something, it was always done so well," says Steve. The guitar he built was no different. Instead of making a Martin or Gibson style guitar, he built something more akin to a classical guitar – but for steel strings. "It was very quirky," comments Steve. "Everything Dave did was quite quirky, that was his sort of genius, really." As if to prove that point, the next guitar Dave built resembled a box…

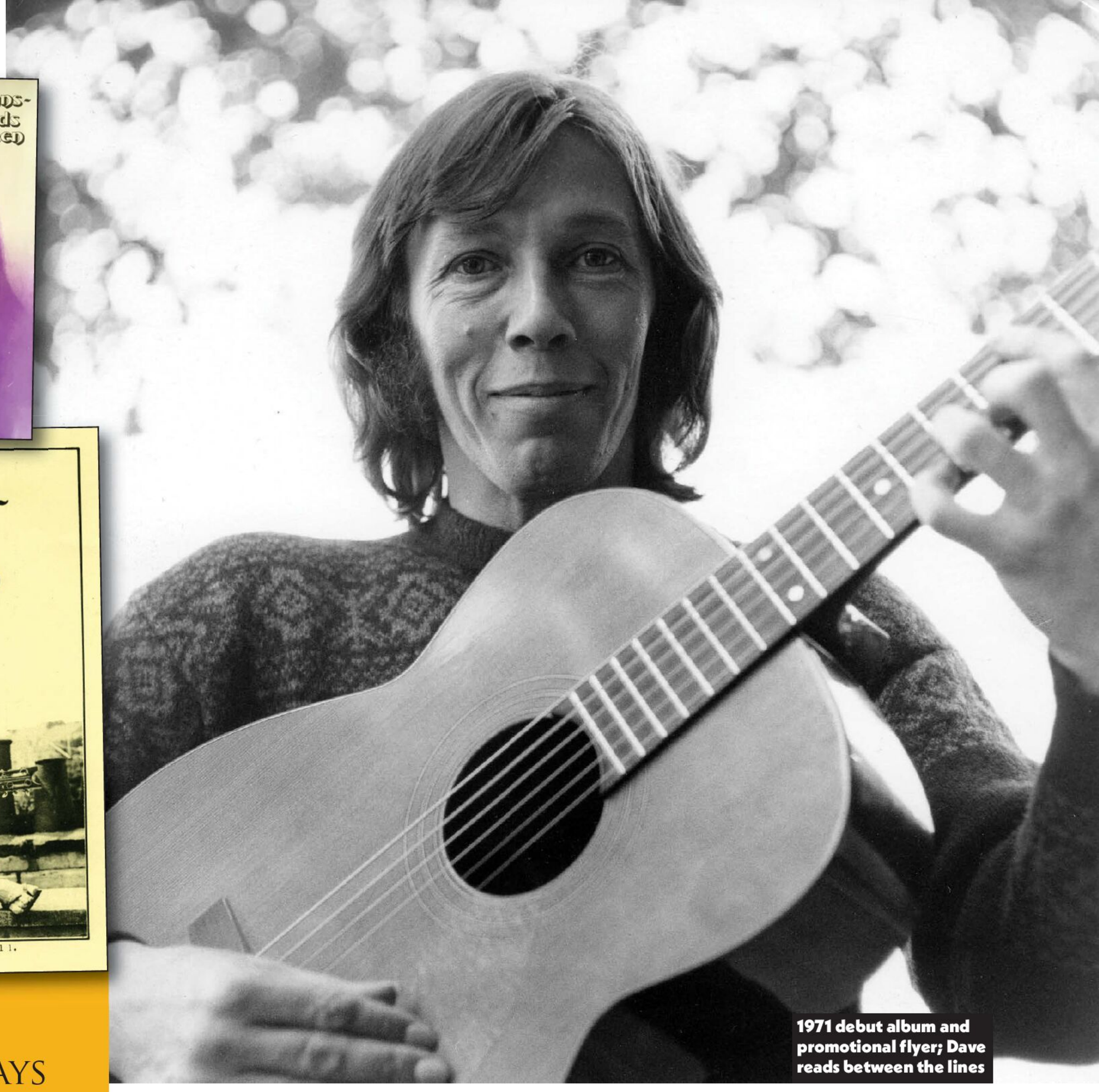
Steve then moved to London to try to become a professional musician while Dave got a job as a designer at Honiton Pottery in Devon. Through Wizz Jones, Steve got to know many musicians at the famous London folk club Les Cousins. And as it happened, the most famous folk club outside London was The Troubadour in Bristol, immortalised in the song 'Clifton In The Rain' by Al Stewart, to whom the club was almost like a second home. More or less run out of The Troubadour, Ian A Anderson had started a label called The Village Thing at the end of the '60s. "Wizz Jones had recommended Steve Tilston to get in touch with us," says Ian who set Steve up for a gig. "Funnily enough, that was on the night of the very first Glastonbury Festival," remembers Ian. "We were all down there during the day because I was playing, and then we had to rush back to the club in the evening for Steve to do his set."

Steve was offered to make an album and wanted to get Dave to play on it. By chance he bumped into a school friend of Dave's in London, who knew which village Dave was living in. "We just decided to drive down and knock on a few doors, "says Steve. "And the first door we knocked on, the guy sort of said, 'Yeah, he's three doors down.'"

"We had no idea who Dave Evans was," remembers Ian. "But 'Yeah, of course. If you want to do that…'" Dave was brought along, and as always, everyone







1971 debut album and promotional flyer; Dave reads between the lines

> "All press reviewers always mention Nick Drake, and Dave was nothing like Nick Drake"
> Ian A Anderson

instantly liked him. "Dave played some of his stuff in the club and we were bowled over."

"We did the recording in the wilds of Gloucestershire in a frozen farmhouse in the depth of winter," remembers Steve. Not only was the building primitive, The Village Thing recording facility was also fairly limited. "But we had unlimited time, so it kind of worked," says Ian. The resulting album, *An Acoustic Confusion* released in the early spring of '71 sounds quite marvellous, while benefitting greatly from the subtle guitar interplay with Dave Evans as well has his harmony vocals.

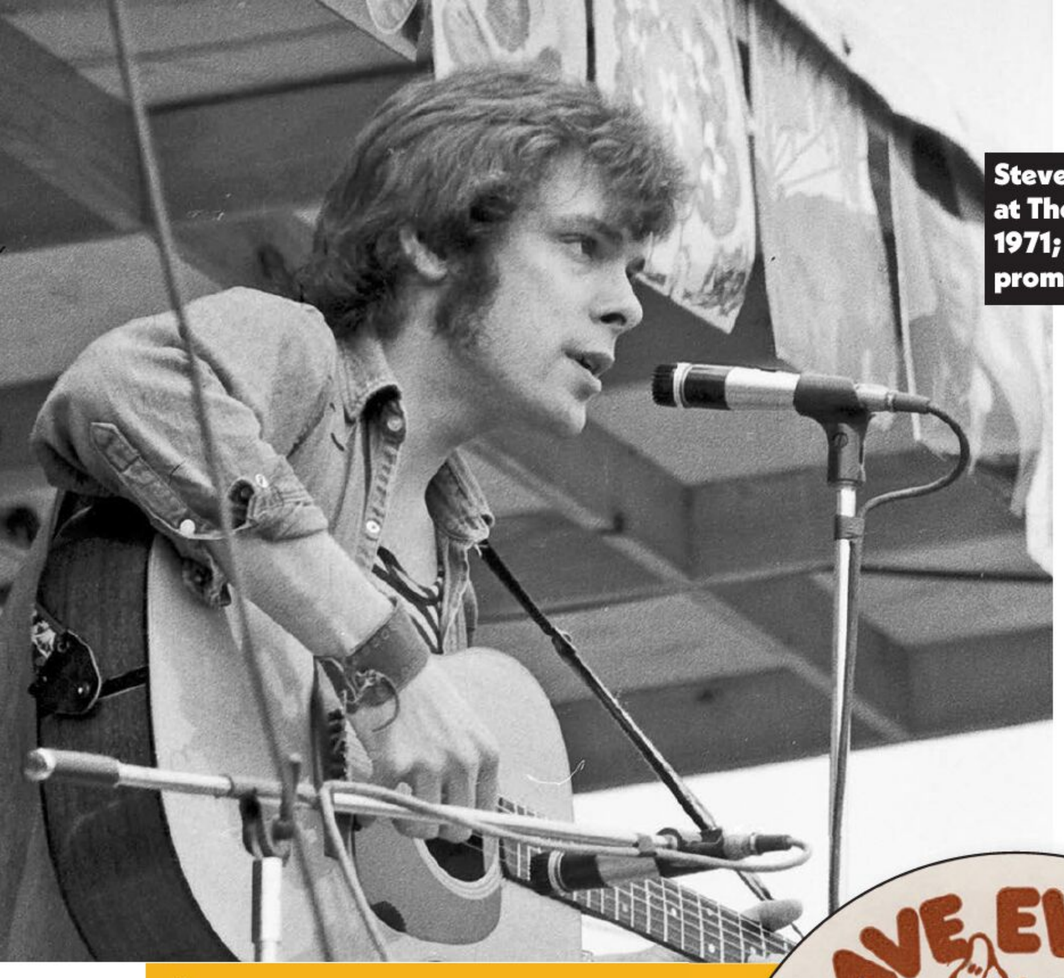
By mid-71, Dave Evans had moved to Bristol, landed a job as a road inspector and, like many fellow folk musicians, had a residency at The Troubadour. The original owner had left for Australia, and the nightclub owner who took over wanted more money than a music club that wasn't licensed to sell alcohol generated. "Friday night there was a rota of all the well-known people who lived in Bristol; myself, Keith Christmas, Shelagh McDonald, Al Jones," explains Ian. Everyone would take turns and not take a fee in order to boost the owner's profits.

However, recording an album wasn't really in Dave's plans. "We persuaded him," says Ian. "He didn't angle for it. We said, 'Dave, you have to make a record.' And he said, 'Oh, really? Oh, okay, I suppose so.'" Ian thought the makeshift studio that Steve Tilston had recorded in would be too rigid for Dave Evans. "Dave would be much more comfortable in some way that was completely informal, so we set the equipment up in my flat in Bristol," comments Ian. The room had nice acoustics, and two good quality microphones were hooked up to a Revox reel to reel tape recorder. "Dave's guitar sounded wonderful," says Ian. "And it just really, really, worked." You can say that again. The resulting album, *Words In Between,* is one of those albums that makes you stop in your tracks the first time you hear it.

Although Dave Evans, according to Ian, sold more records back in the day, modern listeners will instinctively want to compare him with (retrospectively) era-defining artist Nick Drake. "All press reviewers always mention Nick Drake, and Dave was nothing like Nick Drake," says Ian clearly upset about this. "The only comparison I would make is where Joe Boyd, who produced the Nick Drake records, explains why Nick gets devoted fans all the time: "His music is so individual, the recordings are good, and because it's not of the style that's associated with the particular era." In other words, listening to Nick Drake or Dave Evans today is not about nostalgia. It is about experiencing something profound in the here and now.

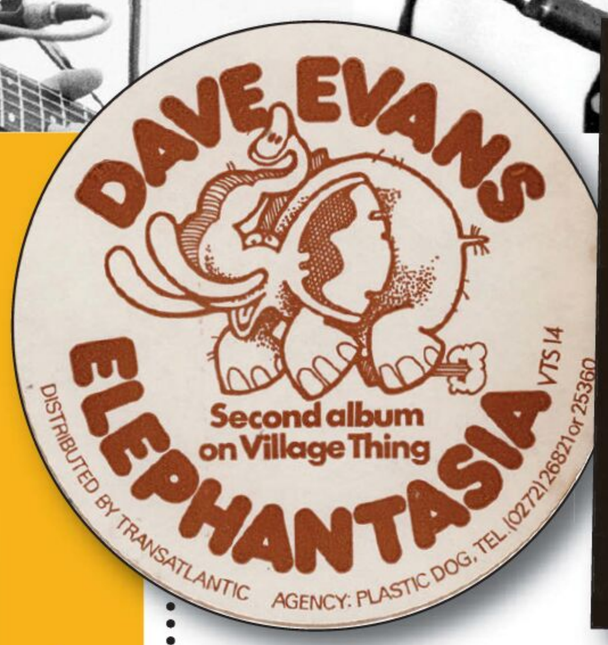
Dave belonged to the school of folk music originating with Davey Graham's DADGAD tuning, and continuing with the light fingerstyle of Bert Jansch, John Renbourn and the baroque folk of Pentangle. But Dave had his own approach. "As the '60s went on, people got a little funkier. Michael Chapman was using almost, like, open tune power chords, but finger picks, you know? Dave was definitely funky, the way he hit those bass strings," explains Ian. "Dave was completely original. He sounded like himself. There were two particular elements, one of which was the self-made guitar. The other is the tunings that he used."

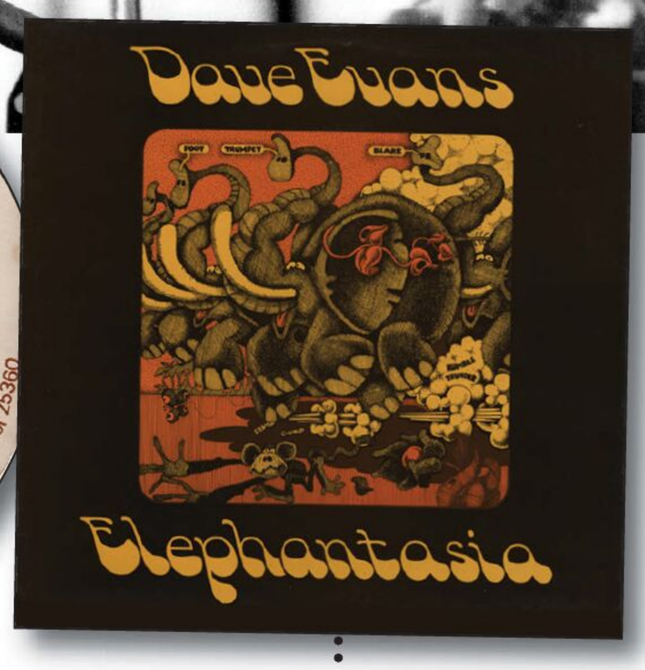
Additionally, an influence Dave very much kept from the original folk scene was the ability to play and sing even the most complex songs live, whether in front of an audience, or in the improvised studio of Ian's living room. "I forget how long we took recording Dave's album, but it probably wasn't more than two or three evenings," says Ian. "I doubt if we would



Steve Tilston and Dave perform at The Cambridge Folk Festival, 1971; '72's *Elephantasia* and promo sticker

PHOTOS BY JO GEDRYCH





> "We just hit it off. I met some limitless guy who had literally been around the world. He had these great tales"
> Steve Tilston

ever have done more than a couple of takes. It wasn't needed."

Although a relative newcomer to Bristol, the release of *Words In Between* established Dave Evans as a central figure. "Dave kind of quickly became our guru," says Ian "We looked up to him because he had life experience, and we would defer to him." He was somewhat older, had a stable relationship with Barbara (who appears on the album's back cover), a charming overweight Labrador dog called Corey, and was an excellent cook to boot. "They were a very nice family unit," says Ian. "But he was very laid back, which didn't help his music career in the end."

Despite the relative success of his debut album, Dave wanted to experiment and not repeat the formula for follow-up *Elephantasia*. He bought a tape deck, and played around with multitracked double-speed guitar, eventually resulting in the title track of the album. "It was a little Sony reel to reel, which had two speeds," says Ian. "We took the tapes and dubbed them off in the studio." Dave's interest in trying out new things however gives the album a somewhat unfocused feel. "We were using Rockfield Studios quite a bit at that time, and Dave wanted to record with a band. With Village Thing, you got to record what you wanted to do," explains Ian. "It wasn't dictated by the label. He wanted to do this."

The Village Thing shared offices with music agency and promoter Plastic Dog, and their designer Rodney Matthews who made the *Elephantasia* cover also drummed in a prog-rock band, so they ended up playing on the record. "Dave never really gelled in a band," says Ian. "The band tracks are okay, but they were not a future for him."

Lyrically, Dave Evans often wrote about everyday life. While deceptively trivial, there is an almost anthropological attention to detail in some of the texts. "He was a good observer," concludes Ian while explaining that Dave's job as a road inspector took him all around the area where he lived. Although he soon found ways to cut (road) corners and get his inspection job done in only three hours per day, it gave him the opportunity to wander around, observe people and see them regularly. "On the wonderful 'St. Agnes Park', he is putting himself in the position of the old guy who always sat on the bench in the park, reminiscing," says Ian by way of example.

After the second album, Dave joined a band called Canton Trig who were originally from London and had appeared on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* but had then relocated to Bristol. They made some demo recordings allegedly produced by band manager Al Read's friend Paul Brett, although Brett himself only has vague memories. "They had Dave playing bass, which is kind of nuts," says Ian. "And I don't think the rest of the band added much to the songs that they did with him leading."

By '73 The Village Thing was winding down operations, and Ian moved to Farnham with then wife Maggie Holland to focus on their duo Hot Vultures. "We were manufactured and distributed by Transatlantic Records," says Ian. "Transatlantic had lots of problems. I just got fed up, so we folded the label up."

By this time, Dave Evans had already struck up a relationship with Stefan Grossman. After an attempt by producer Paul Rothschild to form a group in '66 with Janis Joplin, Steve Mann and Stefan that fell through, Stefan left New York for London in '67, to stay with Eric Clapton. Although Stefan had initially planned on continuing to India, he was instead soon playing in folk clubs around England and making solo recordings. In '72, he then co-founded Kicking Mule, a label that specialised in finger-picking guitar LPs.

Stefan got to know Dave when performing at The Troubadour and recognised Dave's talent. "He thought of himself more as a singer-songwriter, but he had these fantastic instrumentals," says Stefan. "So I asked him, 'Would you like to make an instrumental record for Kicking Mule Records?'" Given the label's focus, the idea was to include a tablature booklet so that others could learn to play his tunes.

"He was down in London and we recorded it all in one night," says Stefan. "After probably five hours we had enough material." If the previous album was unfocused, *Sad Pig Dance* is instead laser focused. The 14 instrumentals are almost hummable despite their complexity, and sound richer than just a single guitar. "The whole idea is to sound like an orchestra, to sound like different things are happening," explains Stefan. Thanks to the varied tunings, the tracks are also distinct from each other. "For others the tuning dictated what was being played on the guitar," says Stefan. "Whereas Dave tried to find the tuning that would enhance and bring out more of what he was attempting to do. He wasn't the one trick pony."

Sad Pig Dance benefits from a professional studio sound and comes replete with Dave's quirky, and somewhat opaque, track commentary, as well as a strange tale about a sad pig who turns into a car mechanic and a fly turning into a giraffe. "I think it's one of the great

Ghosts From The Basement event, Cecil Sharp House, London , September 2010. L-R: Dave Evans, John Turner, Ian A Anderson, Maggie Holland, Tucker Zimmerman

instrumental albums that came out in the ’70s,” says Stefan proudly, and it is hard not to agree with him, as it is simply sublime.

When Dave played on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* on BBC in late February the following year, he chose the album’s complex opening track, fittingly called ‘Stagefright’. Rather than trying to become popular with a national audience, his unusual choice was likely made for the show’s presenter. “He was on there because Bob Harris, the presenter, was a big Dave Evans fan, who played him a lot on his radio show,” explains Ian. Although Dave only intermittently raises his gaze to the camera lens in the performance, he does look a bit scared. But the TV audience doesn’t see what Dave sees. “Just out of view is Lou Reed stoned out of his head, looking like he’s about to fall in front of the camera. Dave managed to play that whole bonkers, crazy, impossible thing with Lou Reed looming there!”

But Dave still had his mind set on being a singer-songwriter and had continued writing songs. Stefan felt that Kicking Mule was more of a specialist label and not the best home for a record of the kind that Dave wanted to make. “We made a demo, and I sent it out to all the record company people I knew,” says Stefan. “We got a total negative response from all the record companies in England. No one was interested.”

Stefan argues that a key reason for the lack of broader record company interest was Dave’s vocals. “It wasn’t the voice that one would say, ‘Oh, well I really love that voice!’” As a last resort in the end, Stefan agreed to putting out the album on Kicking Mule.

The ’76 album was recorded in Livingston Studios in North London, together with the core members of Canton Trig, Robert Spensley on bass and Dave Fuller on second guitar, with both also providing backing vocals. For Dave’s last proper record (he later contributed five tracks to the Kicking Mule compilation *Contemporary Guitar Workshop*) he came full circle back to his days in the Merchant Navy. The liner notes describe how his seafaring days had taught him the importance of cooking, both literally and as a life philosophy. The album title *Take A Bite Out Of Life* was taken from a Polynesian proverb – “Eat life or life will eat you.”

Although beautifully recorded, the frankly awful cover with Dave sitting on a cushion in a hand drawn environment makes it look more like an amateur release. And again, the inclusion of a tablature booklet probably doomed it to the special interests section in the record shops. As a result, despite being very good, it isn’t well-known, and has never been reissued in any shape or form.

In the late ’70s, Dave’s wanderlust led him to move to Belgium. He had met a woman and the beer was good too! He settled in as an instrument repairer and restorer in the back room of a three-story mezzanine Bruxelles building that was the combined home, music shop and workshop of a luthier, Benoit Meulle-Stef.

“You would never know it from seeing him play because he was always smiling, but I think he got quite nervous playing,” says Steve. “I think he much preferred making instruments for a living.” Dave was also diagnosed with Dupuytren’s contracture, commonly referred to as Celtic hand, a condition in which one or more fingers become permanently bent in a flexed position. In 2010, he played at the 40th anniversary gig for Village Thing at Cecil Sharp House in London. “He was a bit rusty because he had terrible problems with his hands by then,” says Ian. “He played a few songs and made a brave thing of it,” remembers Steve. “Everybody was willing him on.”

Dave would remain in Belgium and work on instruments until he passed away peacefully in his sleep at 3 AM on 4th April, 2021 at the respectable age of 80.

“I’m going home.” Those are the last words Dave sings on the final track on his final LP.

Elephantasia is out now on Earth Recordings

THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PSYCHEDELIC FITNESS

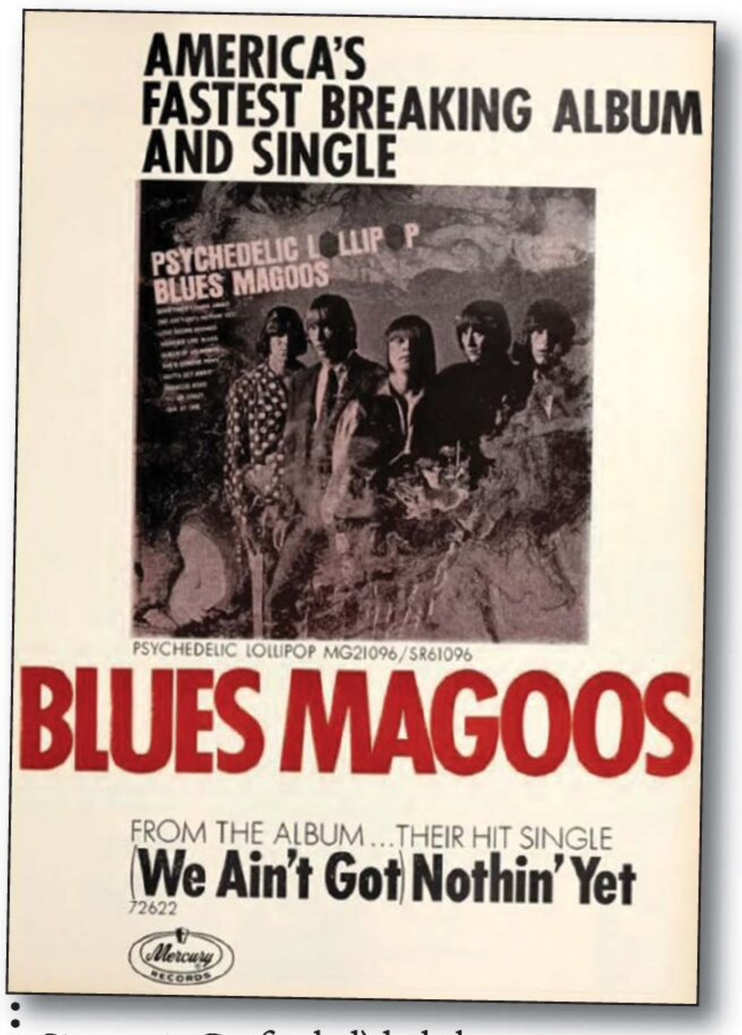
These lollipops ain't suckers. The Blues Magoos in 1966. L-R: Peppy Castro, Mike Esposito, Ralph Scala, Geoff Daking, Ronnie Gilbert

THE BLUES MAGOOS are best remembered for immortal garage anthem '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet', yet behind the fringes lay a street-tough band from The Bronx that could never equate their garage-punk roots, early success and the public's perception of them as grinning psychedelic mascots.

Original members Peppy Castro and Ralph Scala talk to **BRIAN GREENE** about Greenwich Village, hit singles and Gram Parsons.

"People think too much. We were having a ball and living it 24/7"

New York's Blues Magoos might be the most misunderstood of all the US garage bands. Between 1966 and '68 they made three albums that feature the raw, tripped-out basement sound explored by so many other like-minded acts. A handful of their songs have become outright classics of the genre. Yet while peers of theirs such as The Seeds, The Music Machine and The Sonics have always been seen as authentic punks, the Magoos have a stigma attached to them. Their critics say they were commercial; they were bandwagon-jumpers; they were the ones who figured out how to take psychedelic rock and turn it into something you could sell to teenyboppers.



At times the band and their management made moves that didn't encourage fans or critics to take them seriously. Albums with questionable titles, gimmicky packaging and too many novelty moments obscured the fact that they were a truly solid garage band making music fuelled by youthful exuberance and wide-eyed experimentation. The fact that a band called The Blues Magoos made two albums in 1969 and '70 that sounded like they were done by a completely different act (they were), didn't help clear things up for the listening public.

So, who were The Blues Magoos and were they closer to The 13th Floor Elevators or The Archies?

Going for a brief time by the name The Trenchcoats, they soon changed their moniker to The Bloos Magoos and then The Blues Magoos. A guitarist named Dennis LaPore and drummer John Finnegan played in the early incarnation of the act, but by the time of their '66 debut album *Psychedelic Lollipop*, they had gelled into the unit that would remain in place for all three of their garage long-players: Emil Thielheim, later Peppy Castro (rhythm guitar), Mike Esposito (lead guitar), Ralph Scala (organ), Ronnie Gilbert (bass) and Geoff Daking (drums).

"I was 15 when I met Ronnie and Ralph who were playing at a street fair," recalls Peppy Castro, who started as the rhythm guitarist and gradually evolved into being the band's leading force. "We decided to merge and start a band. We became the Trenchcoats. The music was covers of the day and we started to write together."

Ralph Scala, organ player and lead vocalist on some of the band's most memorable tunes, remembers the early days of the group this way: "We really started out as a trend-following folk-rock band and covering the Brit stuff. When we met Geoff and Espo we blew up into the extended sound with Espo's Fender Echoplex and the psych sounds and arrangements."

The Trenchcoats/Magoos became staples of the mid-60s Greenwich Village club scene. There, they gradually moved away from the jangly sounds and towards the signature sound they would become known for: snotty vocals, Farfisa grooves and hard guitars.

"The Village was the place," Castro reflects. "It was cranking and the music scene was exploding. The Magoos were in the first wave of acts to embrace the British Invasion. However, we were on our own path. The English bands were picking from great American artists and we were morphing into what was to be the psychedelic rock movement."

The Magoos' early discovery gives light to a story of one of the nuttiest-sounding auditions ever. Their original manager Marvin Lagenoff (who also managed Simon & Garfunkel) led them to songwriter/producer/A&R man Rick Shorter, who in turn arranged to have them play their stuff for producer Bob Johnston (who later produced *Highway 61 Revisited, At Folsom Prison* and *Songs From A Room* among others). The unlikely audition took place in Johnston's relatively small office – not exactly an ideal location for a full band and all their gear to set up in.

"We did do a live audition for CBS in Bob Johnston's office," Castro remembers. "Can you imagine? Drums, amps and a vocal mic right in his office. I remember Bob Johnston, who was this very tall guy, getting down on his hands and knees to listen to the vocal coming out of this cheesy little amp. Classic!"

Shorter penned the band's first single, 'So I'm Wrong And You Are Right'/'The People Had No Faces'. The single appeared on the Verve/Folkways label and doesn't seem to have made much noise on the charts. This is a shame, as the A-side is one of their finest tracks and boasts plenty of the snarling punk attitude they would become known for. You can hear the step from folk-rock to the harder stuff in – the guitars jangle a little but the overall sound is more aggressive than, say, a Byrds

House of blues; sheet music for 1966 #5 hit '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet' and Top 20 debut album

record. The lyrics and vocal delivery are also vintage Magoos – it's a pro- youth anthem sung in the forceful manner you'd expect from a bunch of kids from The Bronx.

By the time the *Psychedelic Lollipop* version of the band had formed, they were under the direction of the production/management team of Art Polhemus and Bob Wyld, AKA Longhair Productions. A single version of 'Gotta Get Away' – a song this writer considers to be the finest psych/garage track ever recorded, and which would later be the B-side of their biggest-selling single – caught the attention of some heavies at Mercury Records, who signed them up.

Their debut album's title and artwork are where some of the identity crisis that plagued the band began and is also what's behind most of the critical dismissal they've been subject to. The title, *Psychedelic Lollipop* (as well as the band's name, which some found corny), sounds disposable. And although it was one of the first times a band used the word "psychedelic" in a song or album title, many felt the act was using a trendy buzzword in the hopes of peddling records to the masses. So who was calling the shots? Who came up with the band name and the album title?

Peppy: "There was always a tug and pull, but we were the Magoos. The name suited us. Mercury was very supportive and did a great job in hindsight. We were also an easy sell because we were the flavour of the moment. Mike had a painting he did which he called *Psychedelic Lollipop*, which we used for the cover. So, it was a natural and we all loved it and superimposed our photo in front of it and that was the cover. I think it was all true to form. People think too much. We were having a ball and living it 24/7. Our management and label were great at getting us to a hit record. They just didn't have the expertise to sustain it. Any way you slice it we were the first psychedelic underground group in the movement to become a commercial success. That's not a bandwagon."

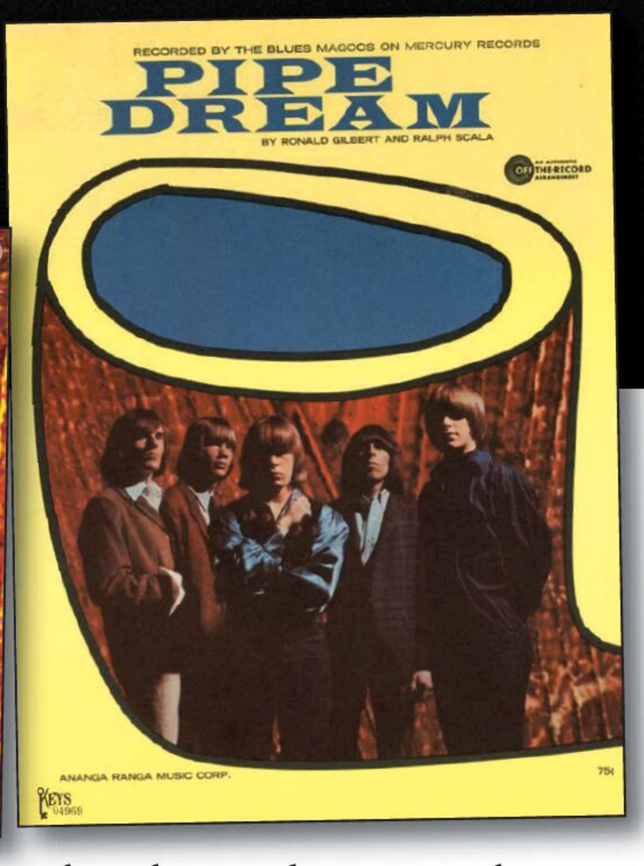
Regardless of what you might think of the band and album name, there is no mistaking the music on *Psychedelic Lollipop*. The 10 tracks that comprise the album are all solid and a few of them are outright psych/garage gems. This was not a fly-by-night record made by a pack of throwaway wannabe pop stars, but rather an impressive debut and one of the most consistent albums of the genre.

Besides 'Gotta Get Away', other highlights include an extended, instrumental freakout- rich take of JD Loudermilk's oft-covered 'Tobacco Road', a world-weary blues lament called 'Sometimes I Think About' and 'She's Coming Home', another stellar garage-rocker. The whole record has a churning, adrenaline-filled energy level and a tripped-out feel. The psychedelia is not of the peace and love flavour that some of the Magoos' West Coast peers championed; this was a pack of New York punks, and their look, sound, and attitude was always such that they seemed more inclined to punch you in the nose than hand you a bunch of flowers.

And then there was the big single. '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet', with its swirling organ, attitude-heavy vocal delivery by Scala, way-out lead guitar parts and its

"'(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet' was a group effort where we each created something from jamming it in the basement of the infamous Albert Hotel, which allowed us to rehearse in their roach-infested basement" Peppy Castro

Signing autographs in Cincinnati; 1967's second album and 'Pipe Dream' sheet music



anthemic lyrics, spent 14 weeks on the *Billboard* chart, peaking at number five. Today it remains one of the most recognisable and well-remembered garage workhorses – on a par with 'Dirty Water', 'Psychotic Reaction', 'Pushin' Too Hard' and 'Oh Yeah'. With 'Gotta Get Away' on the flipside, this is one of the great 45s of the era – garage or otherwise.

"We knew it was special! That's it," Castro remarks. "Sometimes I or Ronnie and Ralph would have an almost complete song and other times it was all of us jamming or a few of us collaborating. We really did it all. '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet' was a group effort where we each created something from jamming it in the basement of the infamous Albert Hotel, which allowed us to rehearse in their roach-infested basement."

Regarding releasing 'Tobacco Road' as a single, with its 4:30 length and its exploratory jam in the middle, Castro's proudly admits: "We were ballsy enough to do it. People wanted it but radio was too restrictive and couldn't play it. The jocks loved it, though. It broke ground and was a pioneer to FM radio. It ensured that when we released '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet' the buzz was fabulous."

In '67 the Magoos' sophomore effort *Electric Comic Book* appeared. Again, they had an album title that seemed to be exploiting the trends of the day and that made the group out to be something not to take seriously. The banal comic strips contained in the packaging didn't do much to deter those who found the band to be forgettable flavours of the month, either.

Sadly, this time the music wasn't quite strong enough to make much of a case against the naysayers. There is really nothing wrong with the tracks on the record, but there's just not enough right with them. The two sides of the 'Pipe Dream'/'There's A Chance We Can Make It' single are both perfectly viable slices of psych-rock, but neither approached the majesty of '(We Ain't Got) Nothin' Yet', 'Gotta Get Away' or 'Tobacco Road.' The single tanked and the album didn't do much better.

Outside of the studio, the band was developing a bit of a legend via its live performances. Sharing bills with the likes of The Who, The Doors and Herman's Hermits, they became known for their attacking sound and dazzling stage props.

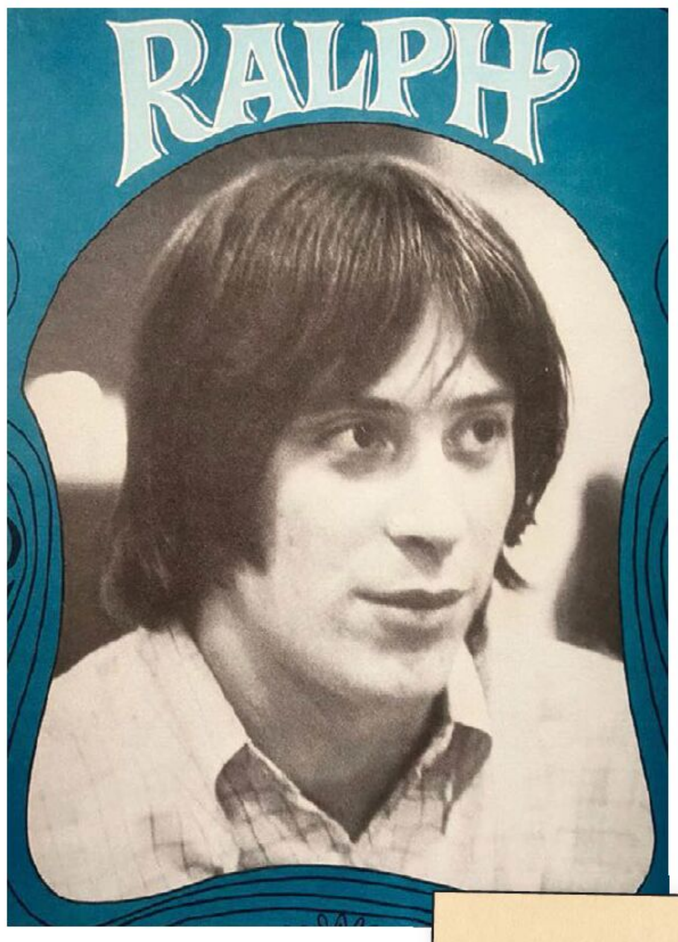
"I believe on stage should always be better than a record," Casto avers. "It's larger than life and we had electric suits and these huge lava lamps on each side of the stage. We also carried around with us a purple, defused World War II surplus torpedo, which we called The Blues Magoos Bomb. If we thought we sucked and didn't go over well we'd throw the bomb out onto the stage after we got off."

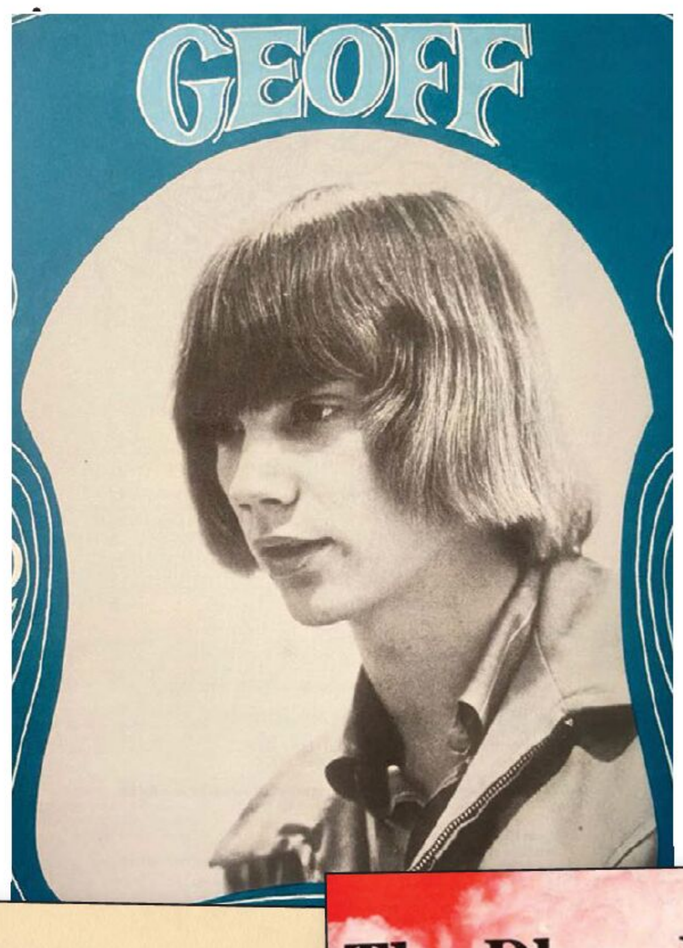
Ralph: "We usually showed up ready to destroy the place and shock the audience with sounds and freaky lighting and other scenes. We were very inventive when doing live local TV shows, like spraying fire extinguishers during a lip sync. Dick Clark hated us, but we were on his show twice. In the studio we were very intense and ready to change the world of music and sounds, and sometimes were successful at it, too."

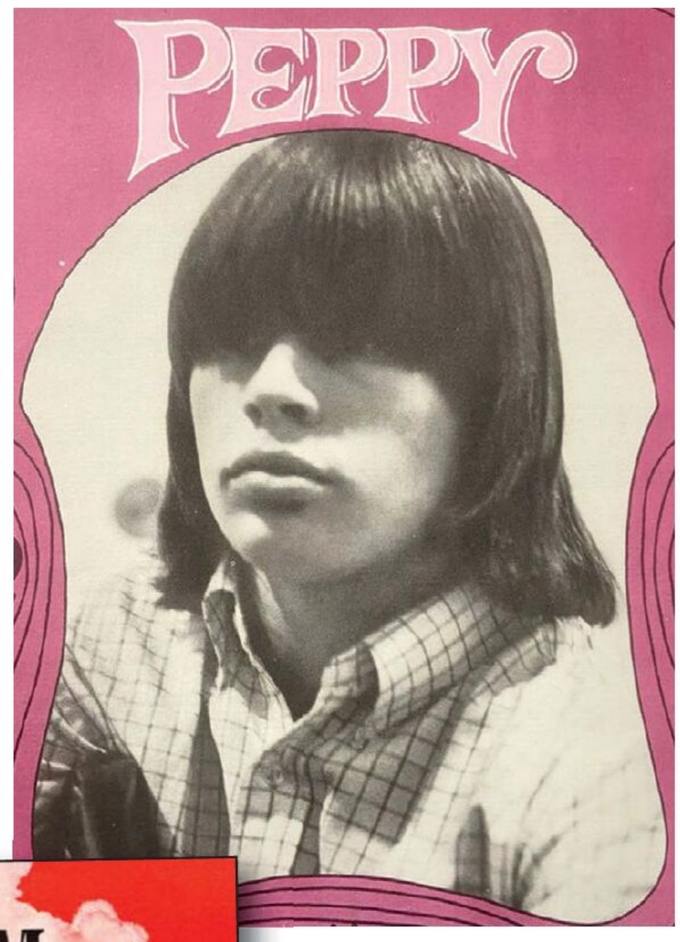
To speak of bands writing their own material, one promising aspect of the relatively lacklustre *Electric Comic Book* was in the songwriting credits. While only five of the 10 songs on *Psychedelic Lollipop* were originals, the band wrote eight of the tunes (we won't count the hokey interjections 'Intermission' or 'That's All Folks') on *ECB*. Situated around a lengthy take of Them's 'Gloria' and a Jimmy Reed cover, the originals, if not standout material, showed that the band were gaining confidence in their own writing. They would take this trust in themselves and do something much more substantial with it on their next album.

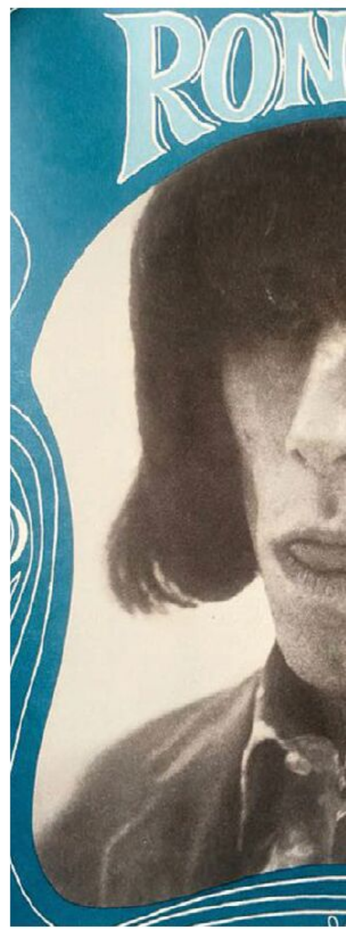
"The covers were a split," Castro relates. "'I Can Hear The Grass Grow' was suggested to us by management but we were doing our own thing on things like 'Gloria.' The band was constantly evolving, and we were becoming better songwriters."

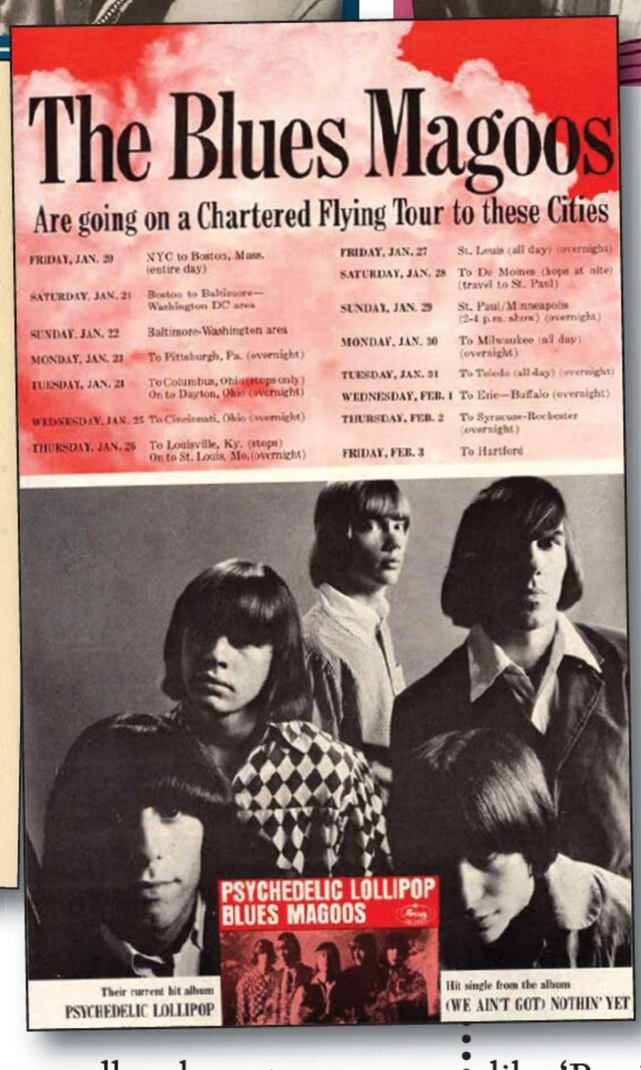
Basic Blues Magoos, the third and final











album by the classic iteration of the band, was released in '68. This is easily their most mature album and a record on which they seamlessly combined the psych/garage of their first two efforts with more straight-ahead blues-rock the next version of the band would explore.

Parts of the album were recorded at the house where many of the members of the band then lived. A stately residence in The Bronx, the abode had previously been the home base of The International Submarine Band. When Gram Parsons and his country-rock cronies decided to try their luck out West, the Magoos moved in. They quickly put their stamp on the place, kitting it out in psychedelic fashion with lava lamps, strobe lights and various other props that identified it as a home for freaks. I'm guessing that if any straights lived on that block, they went elsewhere when they needed to borrow a cup of sugar. Oh, and it also seems the house was haunted – or was that just something the boys imagined when under the influence?

"Gram was the first person to get me high on pot," laughs Castro. "We did have some world-renowned ghost hunters come into the house, and indeed many years back there was a fellow who hung himself inside the house. So put all that together with a dose of the soup *de jour* designer stuff and you had one very colourful environment."

Ralph remembers the house, as well. "Gram Parsons was renting it and we took it over without the landlady even knowing it. The studio was small and great-sounding and we wrote and played our best stuff there. Pete Townshend came up one time and heard our tape recorder demos and said 'The Magoos are a serious band.'"

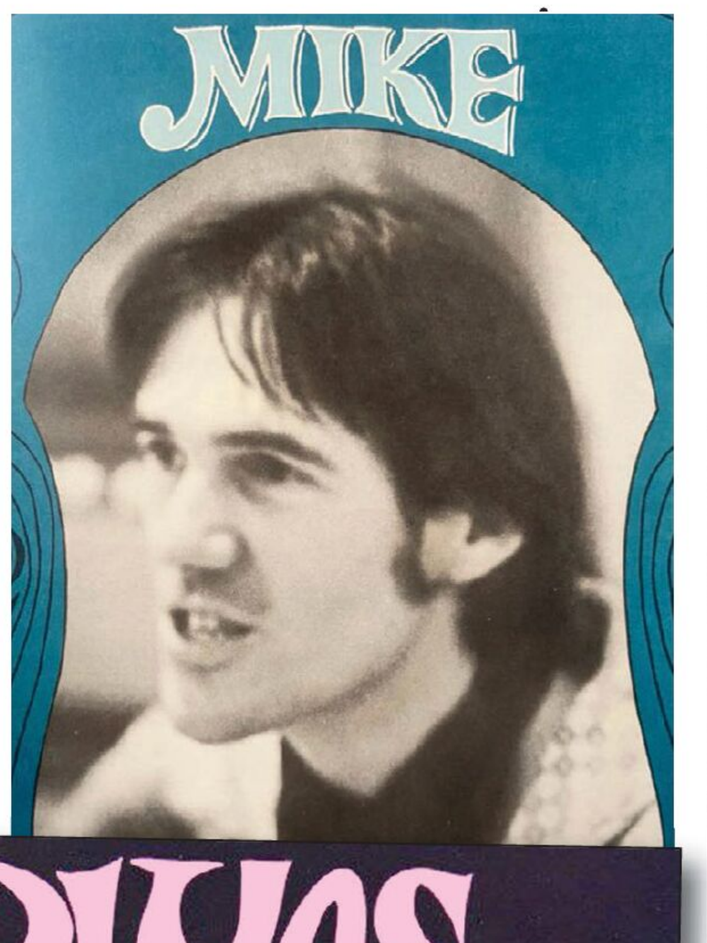
The band recorded at the house because that's where they were comfortable, and they also did it as a means to escape the stifling control of their management team. They were growing as musicians and songwriters and were ready to call their own shots. If there was ever a statement-making album title, *Basic Blues Magoos* is it – no hokey title named by Longhair Productions this time.

The newfound self-certainty shows clearly on the record's opening track: 'Sybil Green (Of The In Between)' is based on a clairvoyant woman who was one of the "ghost hunters" to come and check on the supernatural phenomena going on within the home. The tune is a gem of psychedelic pop, rich in harmony and melody and an easy, breezy feel – really one of the best songs of its kind. After the aforementioned cover of The Move standout 'I Can Hear The Grass Grow', the next mini classic comes in. 'I Can Move A Mountain' is an eerie, yearning, slow rocker with trippy lyrics and an effectively sludgy sound. Castro takes the lead vocal and shows that he's more than capable of being a front man – a development that helped the song, if not the band's long-term stability.

Always class clown types who couldn't help themselves but crack jokes, they couldn't keep from including a few novelty moments. But that's alright, because between songs like 'President's Council On Psychedelic Fitness' and 'Subliminal Sonic Laxative' they worked in yet another stellar tune. 'There She Goes' is the song on the third record which most harkens back to the band's earlier sound and style. A benzedrine rush of sound drive the tune and make it yet another Magoos jewel. 'Chicken Wire Lady,' also an effective psych-rock workout, closes the album out on a trippily high note.

However, as the band gained creative autonomy and self-confidence, wrote and recorded this solid record, they were imploding as a unit. The rollercoaster ride that came with making a hit record and trying to follow up on it was taking its toll. All the struggles attempting to define themselves and their sound with management people, label execs, critics, and a fickle public all having their say, was also having an ill effect on band morale. Add all this to the fact that Castro was starting to write more of the original

"We really started out as a trend-following folk-rock band and covering the Brit stuff. When we met Geoff and Espo we blew up into the extended sound with Espo's Fender Echoplex and the psych sounds and arrangements" Ralph Scala



That teen appeal/psych-rock crossover captured in 1967 songbook portraits; high-profile '67 tour dates; wearing the infamous light-up suits; 1968's third album

material and taking the majority of the lead vocals, and you've got the usual creative control differences and internal envy added to the mix.

"My songwriting skills were on the move and it was concerning for the other guys," explains Castro. "There was some jealousy starting and the group was on the decline. It wasn't a good scenario for us at the time."

A band breaking up just when they seemed to be growing together as musicians and songwriters seems an unlikely and unfortunate turn of events. But then maybe it was best that way – leave things on a high note, before the music goes sour and the personal tensions escalate to a point of no return.

"For the most part we all enjoyed the ride and ourselves," is how Castro sees the story around the original band now. "The Magoos were all about having fun and music. We knew we were in trouble by that point [the time of the third album] but we were also enjoying the musical progress. *Basic Blues Magoos* is a great record.

"The Magoos' parting was emotional at the time. The band was breaking away from management and had internal problems as well. I was all of 19 years old and already a has-been."

When that incarnation of the band split, that should have been the end of the name The Blues Magoos. But once again management took over. Wyld sold the name to ABC records, and when he convinced Castro to start a new act with a different sound and different set of players, it was that moniker they chose to record under. This cast made two records for ABC – '69's *Never Goin' Back To Georgia,* and *Gulf Coast Bound* the following year. Latin-infused blues-rock that showed off some nice playing at moments and could be compared to Santana if you want to be generous, these records were mostly flat affairs that were not worthy of the band's name.

Castro: "The second Magoos was really to be a new act. I, being of Latin descent, had this idea that I should discover some of my roots. So, I put a band together with the concept of trying to be the first Latin rock group to come onto the scene. I then got approached by Bob and Art who informed me that they owned the name Blues Magoos and had already signed the name over to ABC Dunhill.

"I was very surprised. They felt that I was a main focus of the Magoos and offered me to be the next incarnation of the Magoos. I figured I could go back to square one and start all over again or take the deal and be productive and get my material out. However, when it came time to release the record the other guys tied it up in court and the record was shelved for six months. In that six-month period Santana came out and I lost the chance at being the first. Even though the record was in the can.

"I wasn't really thrilled with them [the two ABC albums]. Some of it was great and *Never Goin' Back To Georgia* got amazing airplay. I was enjoying the direction but not for the Magoos. In hindsight, I think it would have been nice for a fresh start with the concept."

The other Magoos made a stab at reforming. They moved out West like Gram, and a guy called Ted Munda replaced Esposito on guitar. They recorded one unremarkable single for an obscure label before realising this wasn't going anywhere. Finally freed of his attachment to Longhair Productions, Casto later formed the gentle rock band Barnaby Bye with the Alessi brothers, then he resurfaced in the early '80s with the act Balance. Reformations have since followed along with a new album in 2014, entitled *Psychedelic Resurrection*.

The three original albums are full of highlights, a whacky '67 Xmas single is cooler than it should be, and the later stuff stands up in its own funky way, but the Magoos' legacy rests on the pulverizing snot-nosed garage-punk of 'Gotta Get Away' and the truly brilliantly realised psychedelia of *Basic Blues Magoos*. If you don't know these records, rectify that now. S!

This is an abridged version of an article that originally appeared in our out-of-print Psychotic Reactions *bookazine in 2009*

FUNCKY FREAKS, GOOD!

AS THE COUNTERCULTURAL REVOLUTION OF THE '60S BEGAN TO SPREAD AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POLITICAL AND SOCIETAL NORMS GAINED MOMENTUM, THERE WAS A SMALL GROUP OF LONG-HAIRED FREAKS WHO SIDESTEPPED THE LOVE AND PEACE. WHAT CAME TO BE KNOWN AS **LA'S FREAK SCENE** SWIFTLY SHIFTED FROM THE HIPPIE IDEAL TO ONE OF SEX, (ALMOST) NO DRUGS AND THE MOST ROGUISH FORM OF ROCK 'N' ROLL. **SARAH GREGORY** TRACES THE HISTORY OF THIS MOVEMENT AND ITS KEY PLAYERS – **FRANK ZAPPA & THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, KIM FOWLEY** AND THE LITTLE-KNOWN BUT INSTRUMENTAL **VITO PAULEKAS** – UNTIL ITS IMPLOSION IN A HEAP OF RECRIMINATION, TRAGEDY AND DOWNRIGHT UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Take your pick – everyone's playing this week! The Whisky A Go Go, Sunset Boulevard, October 1966

"FREAKING OUT is a process whereby an individual casts off outmoded and restricting standards of thinking, dress and social etiquette in order to express CREATIVELY his relationship to his immediate environment and the social structure as a whole… when any number of 'Freaks' gather and express themselves creatively through music or dance, for example, it is generally referred to as a FREAK OUT. The participants, already emancipated from our national social SLAVERY dressed in their most inspired apparel, realise as a group whatever potential they have for free expression." – The Mothers Of Invention, *Freak Out!*, 1966

The term "freak" has become inextricably linked with the countercultural revolution of the '60s. Turn on, tune in, drop out. But in truth, it is reserved for the much darker, more extreme sect of the underground who radically dispensed with societal norms in favour of freedom with no limits. Ostensibly centred around the inscrutable Frank Zappa, the freak scene was not a movement driven by psychedelia and mind-altering drugs. These outsiders chose sex and wild dance instead of the oft-demanded love, love, love – challenging the system with a singular, antagonistic musical approach.

The story really begins in the early '60s at a Beverley Hills' boutique store where the long-haired moustachioed chancer Vito Paulekas and his considerably younger wife Szou started to sell the first hippie clothes in Los Angeles. Arriving in California at the end of the war and fresh from the Marines (it was that or prison), Paulekas started to assemble a weird and wonderful band of brothers (and sisters) that included Errol Flynn's daughter Rory; the half-moustachioed, half-bearded Ricky Applebaum; a cluster of young girls, many of whom ended up in The GTO's, and Vito's partner-in-crime, Carl Franzoni, aka Captain Fuck. The unifying factor? Dancing and sex. Counterculture documenter Barry Miles suggests that it was in fact this motley crew that kicked off the hippie counterculture – ironic given the later vehement antipathy towards it. "The first hippies in Hollywood, perhaps the first hippies anywhere, were Vito, his wife Zsou *(sic),* Captain Fuck and their group of about 35 dancers. Calling themselves freaks, they lived a semi-communal life and engaged in sex orgies and free-form dancing whenever they could." Boasting an open house for the waifs and strays of California, 36 people lived there by 1967, as Vito and his pals played host to packs of eminent visitors, including Beatle George and Timothy Leary.

But the freaks weren't musicians – they were facilitators. Hoping to cash in on the rising tide of new guitar bands, clubs, including The Whiskey, London Fog and Pandora's Box that started to spring up all over the Strip in the mid-60s, and it wasn't long before these impresarios got wise to the mounting sway that this group of dancing freaks seemed to have over the teenagers. "Nowadays, if anyone opens a new club on the West Coast, they have to invite Vito and his crowd," Kim Fowley (more on him later) told *Record Mirror* in '66. "They all wait there eagerly to see if [Paulekas] turns up. If he does, everything's okay. It makes the place." The Doors' Ray Manzarek concurred. "There were these guys named Carl and Vito who had a dance troupe of gypsy freaks. They were let in for free, because they were these quintessential hippies, which was great for tourists."

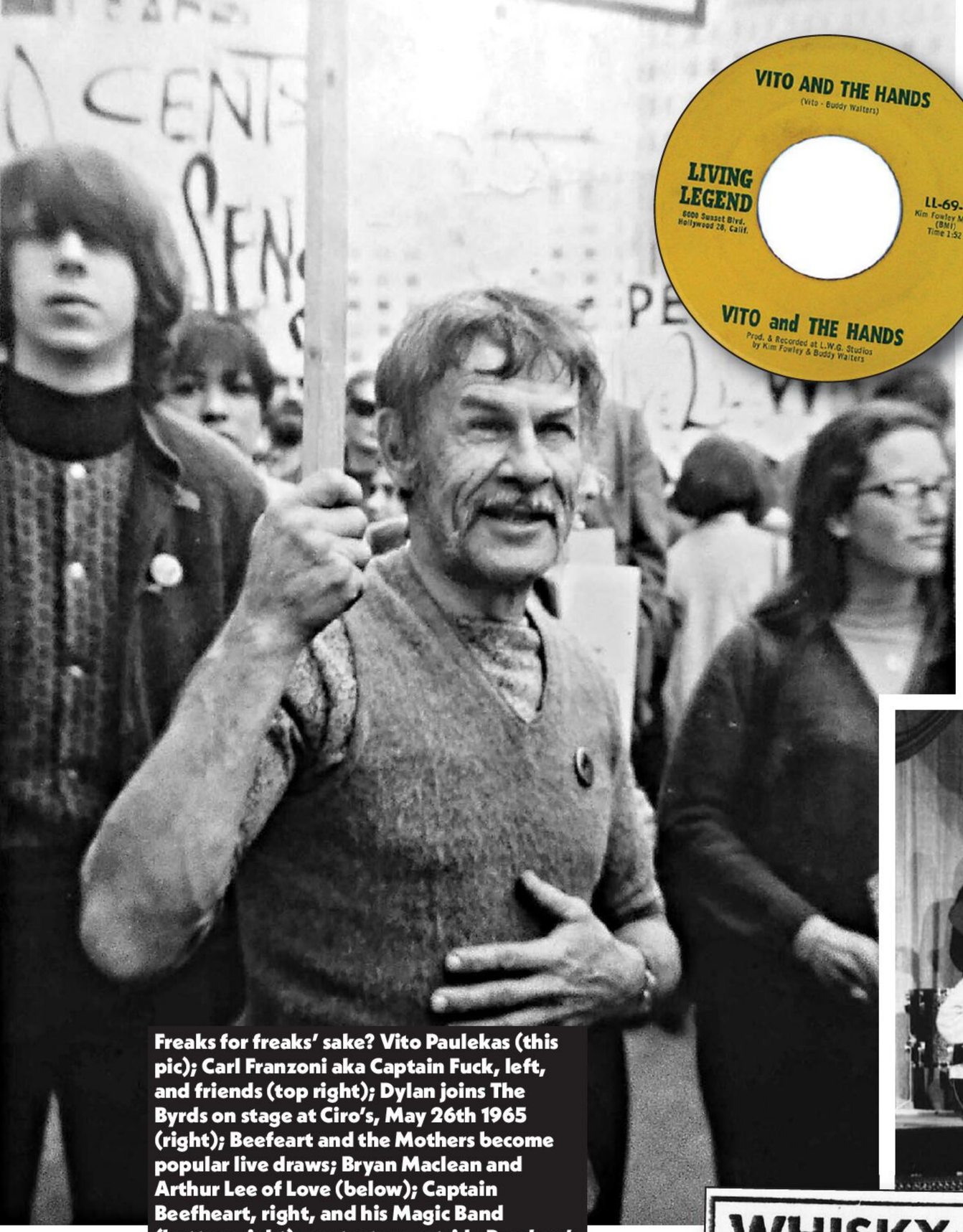
Meanwhile, when Vito wasn't using his boutique basement, where he taught bored rich women how to model clay (for starters), the space was given over to new fledging bands as a quiet place to rehearse. The Byrds were one of the first to use it. It may be counterintuitive to think of The Byrds as one of the first of the freak scene bands, but history tells a different story, and according to David Crosby, it was the freaks that spread the word – they were their first fans. Fowley claims that Byrds' manager Jim Dickson put the band on at the legendary Ciro's "on the basis that all the freaks would show up and The Byrds would be their Beatles". Love's Alban Pfisterer goes even further. "[Vito] got The Byrds together, as I remember." A bold claim, but there seems little denying that Vito *et al* were more influential than perhaps they have been given credit for. Arthur Lee was more open; Love also used Vito's sex-studio-cum-rehearsal room. "We did share everything – some of the best times of my life were in '65 with Bryan (MacLean), Vito, Carl," he told *Mojo* in 2002. "I was an authentic hippie – maybe the first black hippie."

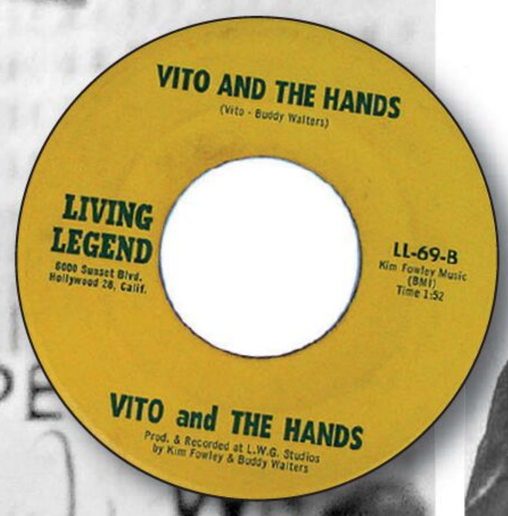
Generous with his time and space, Vito nevertheless characterised the dark underbelly that lay so close to the surface of '60s LA. A magnet for young teenage runaways, he was not one to turn them away – especially the girls. "He was having flings, relationships, whatever you want to call it, with many underage people," said Pamela des Barres, Paulekas devotee and later GTO. More disturbing is the night his three-year old son died; he just went out dancing as always. Barney Hoskyns sums up the juxtaposition that was his life. "Vito was some sort of shamanic magus, a typical LA fraud, perhaps. But let's just say he was clearly very important as an instigator and ringleader and Svengali who channelled his bohemian impulses into the birth of freaky scenesterism on Sunset Strip."

Naturally, it wasn't long before LA-based Zappa and his Mothers Of Invention crossed paths with Vito. "The customers came to see the freaks dance," said Gail Zappa. "Nobody ever talks about that." And the man himself was won over by their ability to command attention. "As soon as they arrived, they would make things happen," said Zappa. "They gave life to everything that was going on." An attitude that chimed with his determination to use shock and peculiarity to grab attention and disturb the status quo. "I am trying to use the weapons of a disoriented and unhappy society against itself," Zappa told *The New York Times* in '66. "The Mothers Of Invention are designed to come in the back door and kill you while you're sleeping."

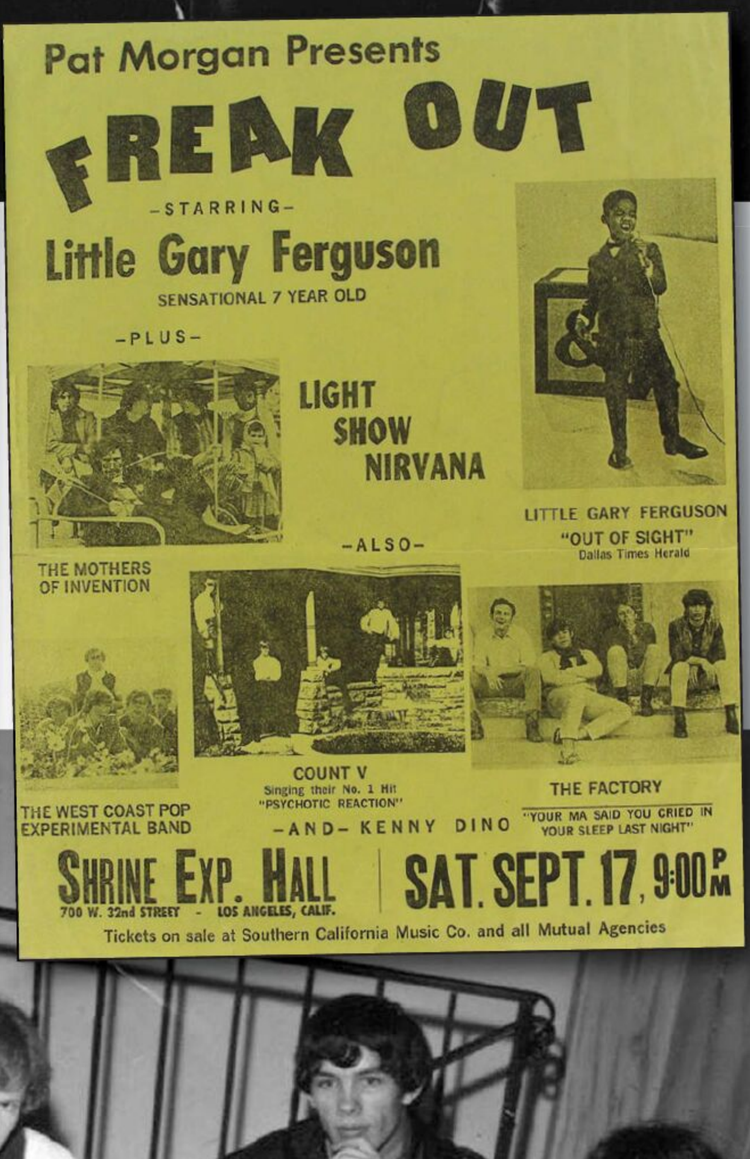
Zappa truly believed that the only way to instigate change was through music, but he wasn't really interested in the music of the time, he was more enamoured by modern classical – Stravinsky and Varese, jazz and old rock 'n' roll. But that didn't stop him wanting to go and press reset. "We call our music the 'new free music'," he told *Beat* in '66. "Music is now freed from the past." And he proceeded to mould the Mothers with this in mind. "[They] are primarily musical satirists. Beyond that, they are perhaps the first pop group to successfully

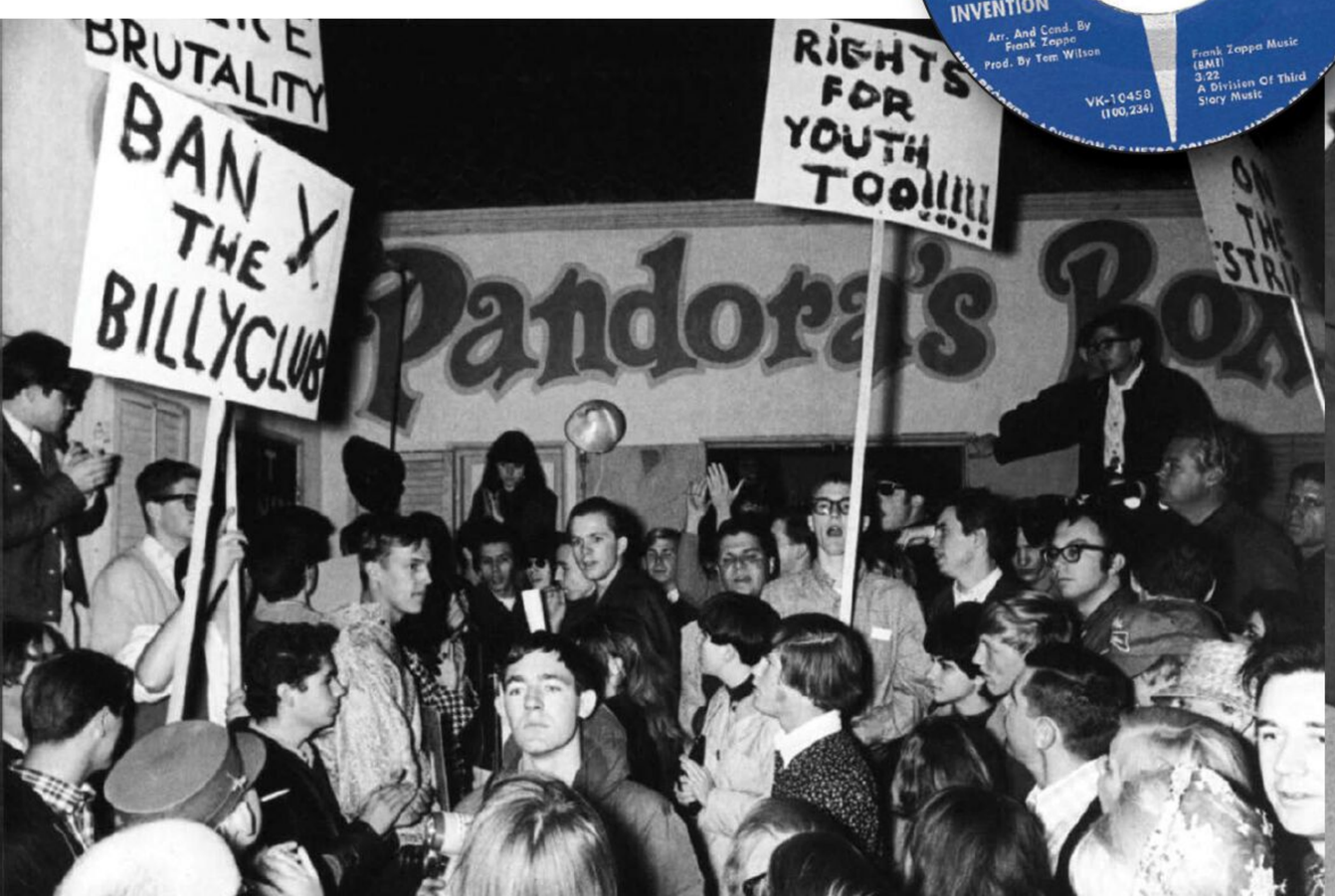
"THE FIRST HIPPIES IN HOLLYWOOD, PERHAPS THE FIRST HIPPIES ANYWHERE, WERE VITO, HIS WIFE ZSOU (SIC), CAPTAIN FUCK AND THEIR GROUP OF ABOUT 35 DANCERS. CALLING THEMSELVES FREAKS, THEY LIVED A SEMI-COMMUNAL LIFE AND ENGAGED IN SEX ORGIES AND FREE-FORM DANCING WHENEVER THEY COULD" BARRY MILES



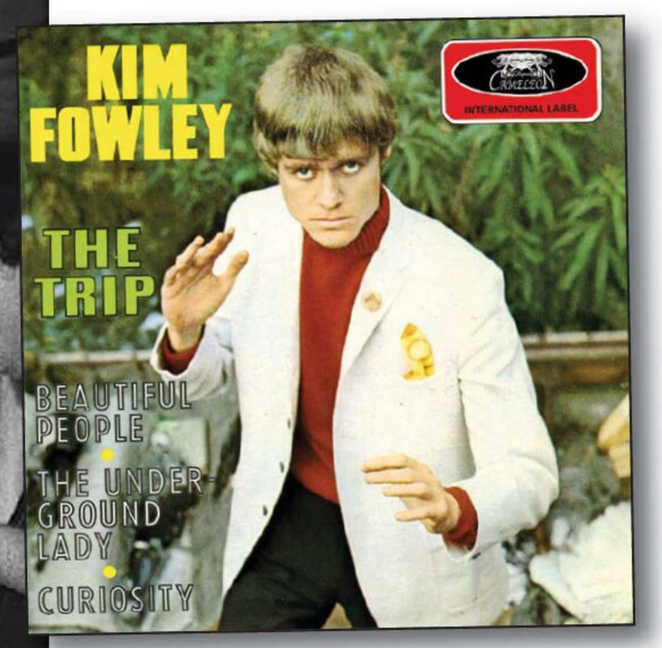


Freaks for freaks' sake? Vito Paulekas (this pic); Carl Franzoni aka Captain Fuck, left, and friends (top right); Dylan joins The Byrds on stage at Ciro's, May 26th 1965 (right); Beefeart and the Mothers become popular live draws; Bryan Maclean and Arthur Lee of Love (below); Captain Beefheart, right, and his Magic Band (bottom right); protestors outside Pandora's Box, 12th November '66 (bottom left)





The Doors at London Fog, May 1966; Kim Fowley cashes in on the trips craze



"I AM TRYING TO USE THE WEAPONS OF A DISORIENTED AND UNHAPPY SOCIETY AGAINST ITSELF"

FRANK ZAPPA, THE NEW YORK TIMES, 1966

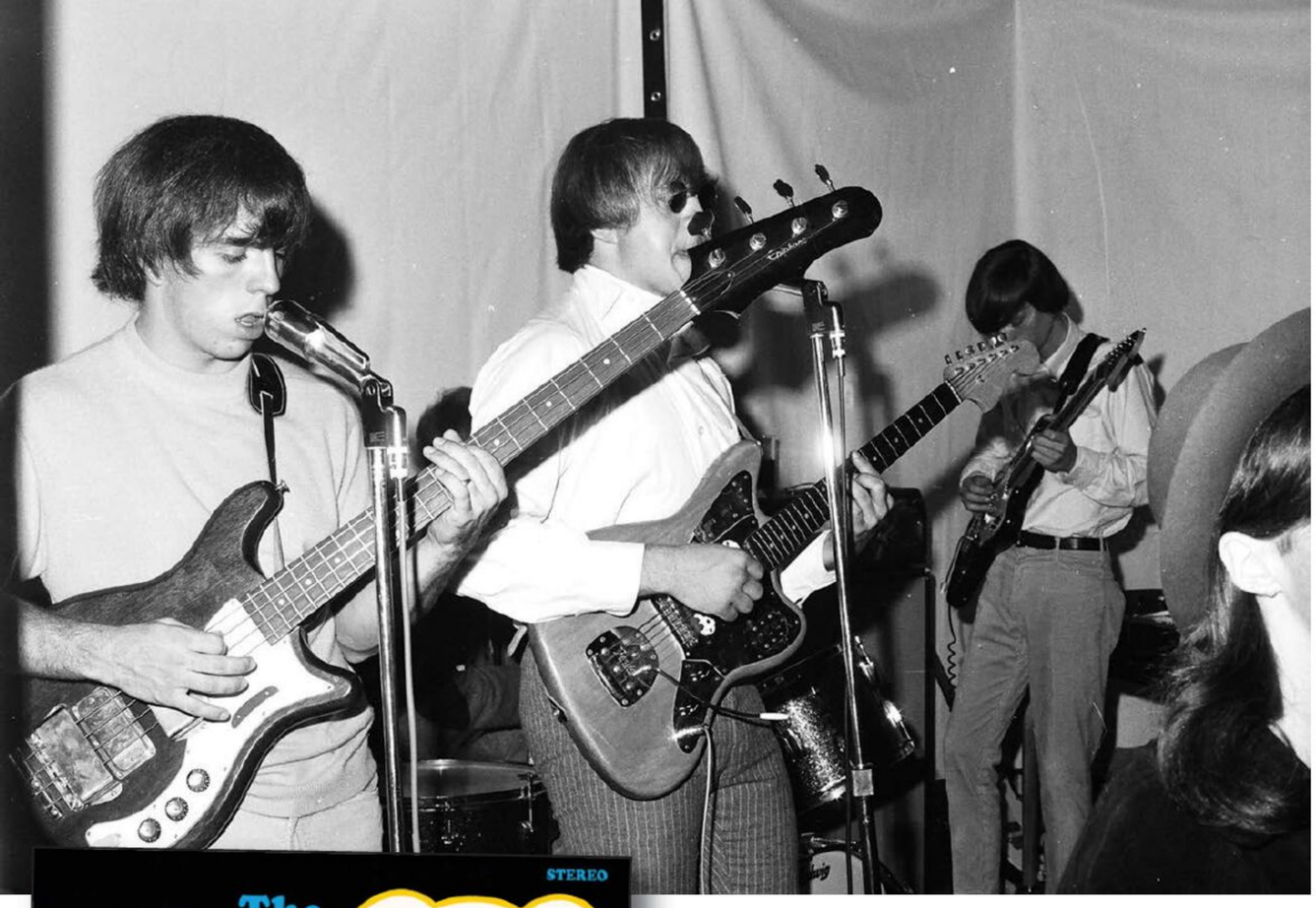
amalgamate rock with the serious music of Stravinsky and others," said Bob Shelton of the *NYT*. "Both in their material and in their looks, they are also furthering some of the more outrageous elements of anti-convention, thus contributing to a new style that might be called 'shock-rock'."

Favouring the collective approach, the Mothers released their debut in '66 – the aptly-titled *Freak Out!* – the second ever double-album of original music after *Blonde On Blonde*. A no holds-barred strike, *Freak Out!* rails against the real LA – the LA of the Watts riots ('Trouble On My Mind') and the pervasive, insidious, authoritarian brainwashing ('Who Are The Brain Police'). Loaded with outstanding musicians, including Dr John, Paul Butterfield and The Wrecking Crew – this is an album that mixes garage, doo-wop and rock 'n' roll with pure *avant-gard*ism, courtesy of tracks like the 12-minute 'The Return Of The Son Of Monster Magnet'. The music was designed to wake people up, not turn off and drop out. "[The Mothers were] providing alternatives to the folk-rock norm," said Hoskyns. "Mocking the cooler-than-thou pretensions of the Sunset Strip 'plastic people' and satirising the nascent hippie lifestyle of San Francisco."

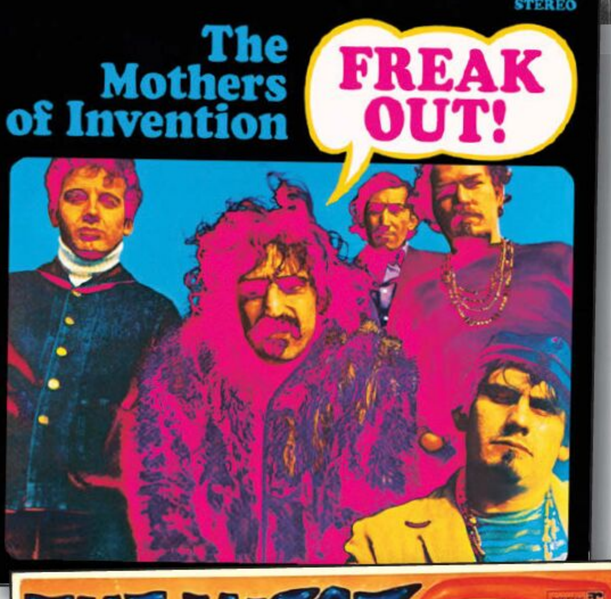
The Zappa cabal extended far and wide as he assembled an entourage of acolytes ready to further his subversive cause – never afraid to cut ties when things became too problematic. Little-known Wild Bill Fischer, for example, was a Zappa touring regular who struggled with poor mental health and erratic behaviour – a source of entertainment until Moon Unit was almost whacked by flying glass. And of course, there's The GTO's. Borne out of Paulekas' troupe, Zappa's female unit were usually to be found dancing on stage alongside their musical chieftain. "They were culturally a very strong influence," said rock-manager Shep Gordon. "They were the female Merry Pranksters, with a weirder side. It was like The Village People on acid". It wasn't long before The GTO's, which included Miss Christine, Pamela de Barres (both nannies for Zappa's kids) and Miss Cinderella (subject of John Cale's infamous 'Gut' – "The bugger in the front row fucked my wife"), started to make their own music under Zappa's tutelage. Their only release, '69's *Permanent Damage,* featured Zappa-inspired titles including 'Wouldn't It Be Sad If There Were No Cones' and 'Rodney', but shortly afterwards the hard drug use started to cause unwanted headlines and Zappa pulled the plug.

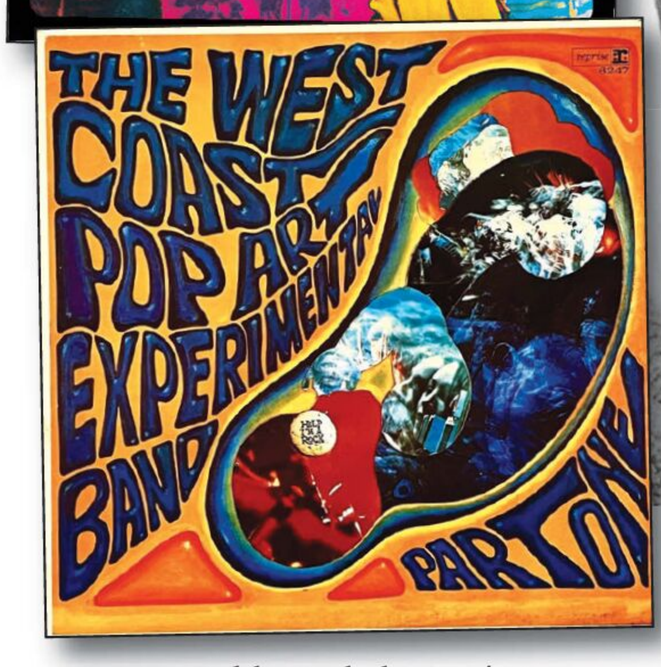
It was also around this time that the first phase of the Mothers came to a close, but not before a suite of albums in which Zappa sustained his rampant invective – jabbing at the commercialism of the masses on *Absolutely Free*'s 'Plastic People' or the obsession with appearance on 'Brown Shoes Don't Make It'. It's probably the lampooning of hippie culture and left-wing politics of *We're Only In It For The Money* – complete with its *Sgt Pepper* parody cover – that is best remembered. The sentiment summed up nicely in 'Who Needs The Peace Corps?' ("Walked past the wig store / Danced at The Fillmore / I'm hippy and I'm trippy / I'm a gypsy on my own / I'll stay a week and get the crabs and take a bus home / I'm really just a phony"); *Melody Maker* describing their live performances as "most definitely a send-up."

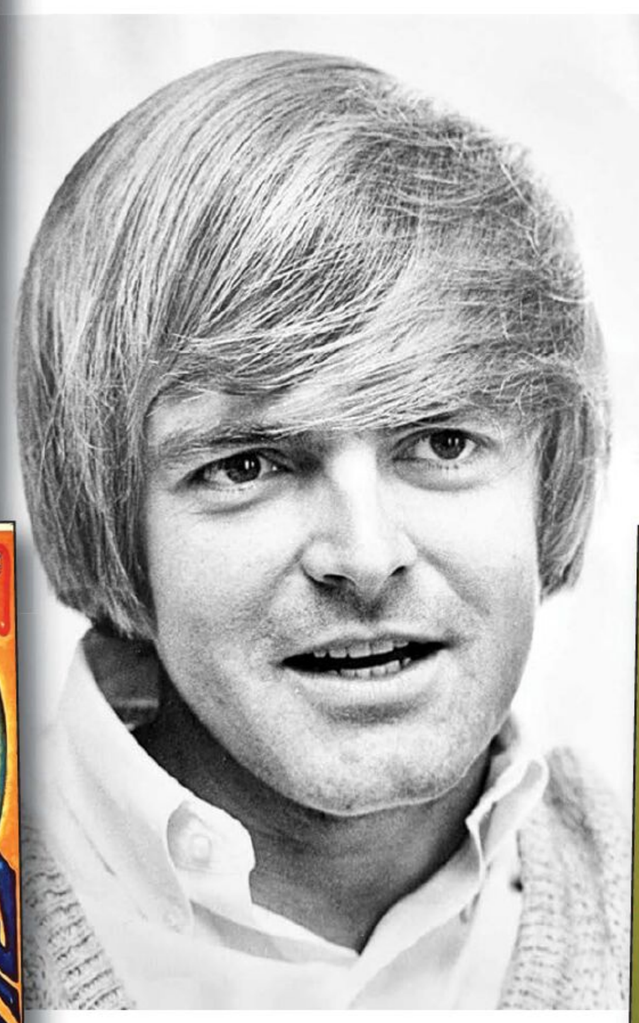
From this dark corner of LA Don Van Vliet aka Captain Beefheart also emerged. Heavily influenced by delta blues and jazz, Beefheart and Zappa's relationship went back to their high school days – jamming together as they found their musical feet. And while Zappa was busy conquering the Mothers, Beefheart hooked up with the Magic Band, releasing caustic but majestic blues-garage debut *Safe As Milk* in '67. The combination of Beefheart's broken glass vocal, blues and pseudo-gibberish lyrics



West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band on stage at The Other Place, 1966 (top left); WCPAEB lynchpin Bob Markley (left); nanny, groupie and future GTO Pamela Des Barres (this pic); key LA freak scene long-players







("Abba Zabba go-zoom Babbette baboon / Run, run, monsoon, Indian dream, tiger moon") made the band tough to place. They puzzled American audiences but were welcomed in Europe. "Bold like Henry the Eighth, benign as a monk, humorous as *The Marx Brothers* and one of the most incredible vocalists I've ever heard," Hugh Nolan of *Disc And Music Echo* remarked. "[They] musically assaulted the biggest crowd I've ever seen at Middle Earth. And one of the happiest." Although the equally brilliant *Strictly Personal* followed a year later, Beefheart just failed to ignite.

Obvious bedfellows, it's of little surprise that Zappa stepped in and signed Beefheart to his newly formed, ironically named Straight Records. Home to the extreme and subversive, including Lenny Bruce and Lord Buckley, this was a fitting place for the seminal Zappa-produced *Trout Mask Replica*. There's no room to dissect that record here but suffice it to say it's one of the most challenging, intense, bizarre, pieces of brilliance ever committed to record – music's equivalent of *Finnegan's Wake*, with its construction as complex and intriguing as the music itself.

"That experience was both fascinating and dreadful for me," drummer John French told Kris Needs. "Don had hooked up with Frank Zappa after the *Strictly Personal* mess. They hadn't been on speaking terms, and I could see that Don was very competitive with Frank." Beefheart embraced extreme measures – forcing his band to sleep in one room, rehearsing for hours on end. "During this whole period of time," says French, "Van Vliet established a 'cult' atmosphere established upon his own paranoid-schizophrenic fears that 'behind the scenes' there was some kind of 'anti-Captain' campaign taking place." Beefheart featured on Zappa's *Hot Rats*' 'Willie The Pimp', but it wasn't long before the pair fell out again; Van Vliet rejecting the freak association completely. "All that image was created for me by Frank Zappa," he told Caroline Boucher in '72. "He used me, and he was trying to keep the artist in me back. He stole my ideas from me in the desert… I would never have said anything, but I don't like to have my heart deluded."

It's tempting to focus exclusively on this extraordinary pair, but the freak scene was very much that – a scene. A home not only to the politically and musically subversive but to those who edged beyond the acceptable – and two names in particular fit the bill. Kim Fowley was a petty criminal and consummate hustler from a young age – wangling his way first into music journalism then music production, where he was hired by Marty Melcher (Terry's dad). Allegedly, taken under the wing of Alan Freed and BB King, he hit the success button in '60 with Gary Paxton and #1 smash 'Alley-Oop'. In fact, so successful was Fowley, that by the time he was 21 he had set up Maverick Records and sired the smash hit 'Nut Rocker'. And in fairness, his musical credentials are hard to argue with. He produced David Gates, Traffic and Soft Machine; wrote lyrics for Cat Stevens; babysat PJ Proby; and raised hell with Keith Moon. But he always enjoyed the seedier side of life. "From '65 to '70, I lived in dirty rooms," he said. "It was dirty rooms for dirty girls." And started to gravitate towards the freaks – producing Paulekas' 'Where It's At' (released under the name Vito & The Hands in '66) and appearing on *Freak Out!* playing the hypophone. "The hypophone is his mouth," said Zappa at the time. "'Cause all that ever comes out of it is hype."

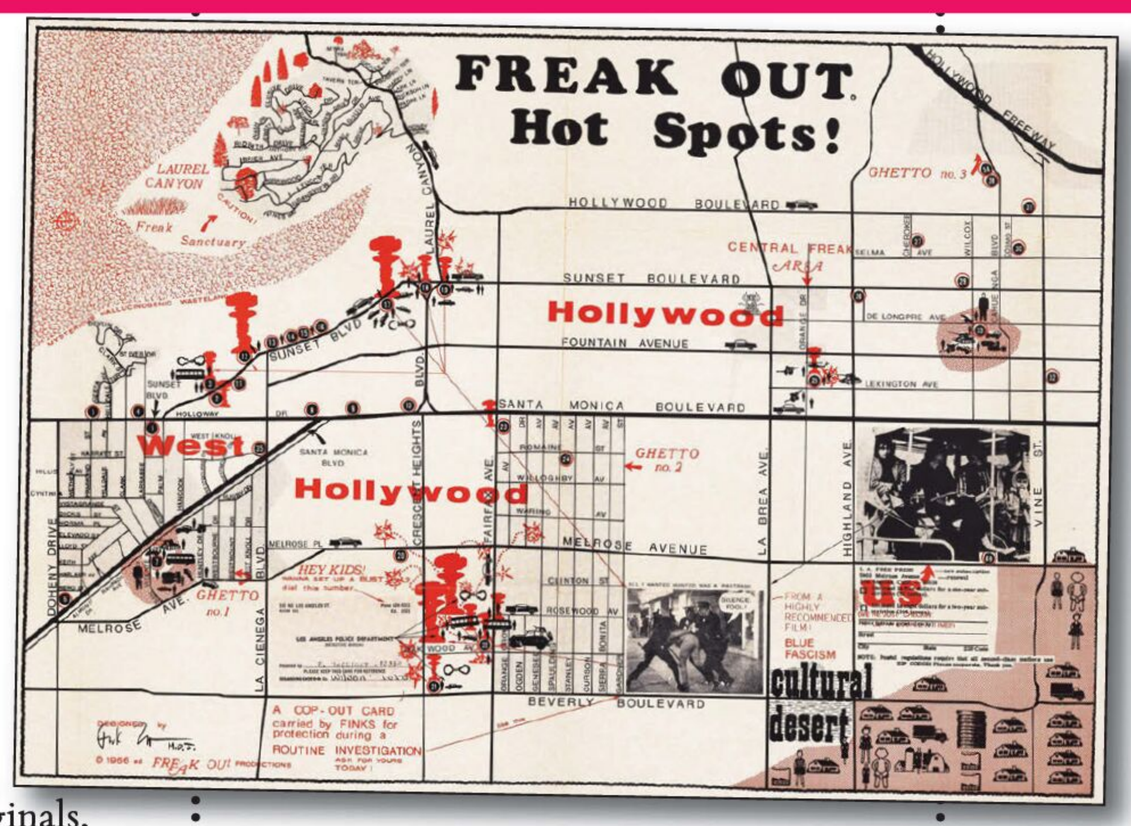
Around this time, Fowley stepped out from behind the console, cutting a record with Gail Sloatman (the future Mrs Zappa) and launching his debut long-player *Love Is Alive And Well*. He also worked as co-writer for The Byrds with Skip Battin. "It was a waste of time," Fowley told Roesner. "I wanted to

write *with* Roger, or *for* Roger, but then Roger and Skip had problems." He ploughed on releasing his own music, while sponsoring the likes of Warren Zevon; he even emceed the Toronto rock 'n' roll festival, headlined by the new Plastic Ono Band. But the '70s saw him veer towards the heavier LA rock scene, where he became manager of all-girl band The Runaways. Revelling in his roguish persona, it wasn't until after his death in 2015 that the truth of his behaviour became clear as accusations of sexual misconduct began to pile up.

Not dissimilar to the fate that awaited notorious control-freak Bob Markley. Son of an oil tycoon, wannabe musician Markley cottoned-on to the allure of being in a band when he saw the amount of adoring female fans The Yardbirds attracted. Interestingly, it was Fowley who first introduced Markley to what was to become The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band. "He seemed like an okay guy," guitarist and keyboardist Michael Lloyd remembers. "We didn't have too much equipment and we wanted to get a light show. Here was this guy who was saying to us, 'Well, I want to be in your band. I'll get the equipment and I'll just play tambourine or congas or something.'" But Lloyd recognised the real mainspring. "He had seen the incredible amount of girls that thought rock 'n' roll was really cool and that was his only motivation."

WCPAEB were more psychedelic than their freak-counterparts, but they equally eschewed the use of lysergics, peace and love in favour of anger towards money and its associated evils. First album – the aptly titled *Volume One* – was a mixture of covers and originals, including a couple of co-writes with Fowley; the band's musical style established before Markley joined. Looped in with the usual hippie set, Markley was more interested in placing WCPAEB as the West Coast's answer to The Velvet Underground, and while follow-up *Part One* dabbles with the standard psych-tropes, it also takes a suitably freaky turn with '1906' and a cover of Zappa's *avant-garde* 'Help I'm A Rock'. As Markley progressively assumed creative control,

"VAN VLIET ESTABLISHED A 'CULT' ATMOSPHERE ESTABLISHED UPON HIS OWN PARANOID-SCHIZOPHRENIC FEARS THAT 'BEHIND THE SCENES' THERE WAS SOME KIND OF 'ANTI-CAPTAIN' CAMPAIGN TAKING PLACE" JOHN 'DRUMBO' FRENCH



Beefheart and Fowley debuts; Fowley 1968 album press ad; the Mothers' '66 guide to LA's hot spots

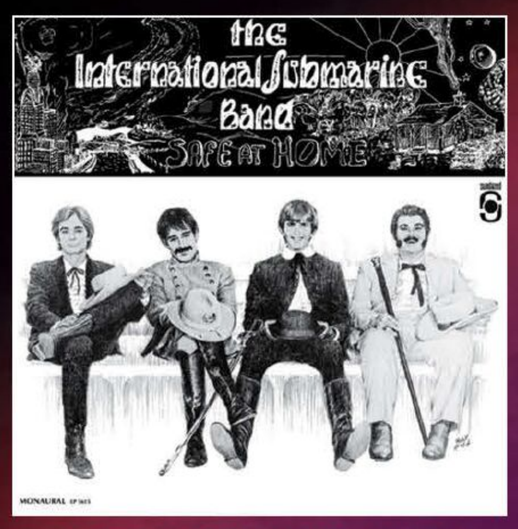
Lloyd left, but '68 saw the band release their greatest album, *Volume 3: A Child's Guide To Good And Evil*. Another superb blend of naivety and confrontation, tracks such as 'A Child Of A Few Hours Is Burning To Death' and 'Until The Poorest Of People Have Money To Spend' did not mince their words; the bleak proclamation of the title track hitting hard: "A vampire bat will suck blood from our hands / A dog with rabies will bite us / Rats will run up your legs." All was not rosy, however. "There would be times when you would have a good melody and you would think I don't want to waste it on this," lamented bassist and lead vocalist Harris; not to mention the more sinister thread that signalled Markley's sexual proclivities. With two more albums to their name, WCPAEB disbanded, and Markley faded into obscurity and a life spent avoiding (not always successfully) the law.

As we near the end of this tale of freakery, a brief word for the new guard, probably best represented by a band who propelled themselves into the '70s on a platform of blood and horror. Shep Gordon quickly recognised Alice Cooper's ability to clear the dancefloor as an opportunity – one that he placed in Zappa's path. "We identified with Frank," he told Poppin in '69. "But we were more affected by him than influenced. We understood that there was someone thinking the same way and so when we got together with him it worked perfectly." Swiftly signed to Straight Records, The GTO's created Cooper's horror-theatrical image and the rest is history."

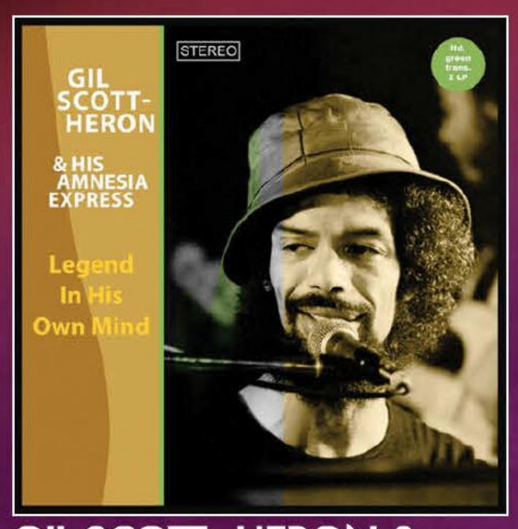
Naturally, the story doesn't end here. Zappa's Mothers Of Invention were soon to return, Beefheart was on a brief hiatus, and Fowley and Cooper rode the tide of LA hard-rock into the '80s. But the original LA freak-scene stuttered to a close at the end of the decade, coinciding with the collapse of the hippie vision in a rush of assassinations, police brutality, hard drugs, Vietnam and of course, Manson. "The tension broke that day," claimed Joan Didion. "The paranoia was fulfilled." The freak scene was always awake to this dark underbelly – Zappa and Beefheart knew that peace and love wasn't the solution, while others just casually rode the wave of freedom for as long as they could. The freaksters straddled these closely aligned circles of peace and violence. "Sixty-seven was when L.A. was really on fire with sex, death, dope and violence," Fowley told *Rolling Stone*. "It was fun." S!

proper
powered by Utopia

BEST OF THE YEAR 2023

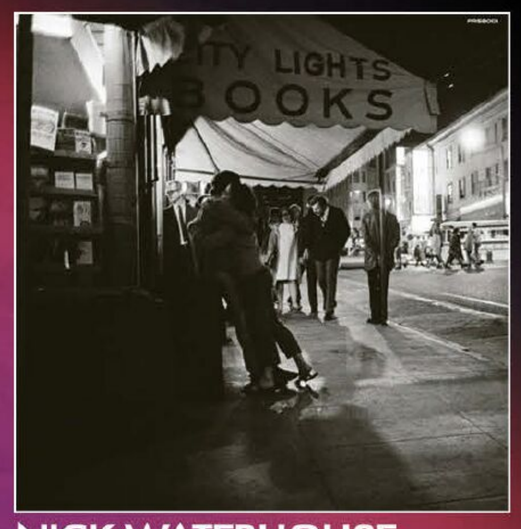


THE INTERNATIONAL SUBMARINE BAND (FEATURING GRAM PARSONS)
SAFE AT HOME
SUNDAZED

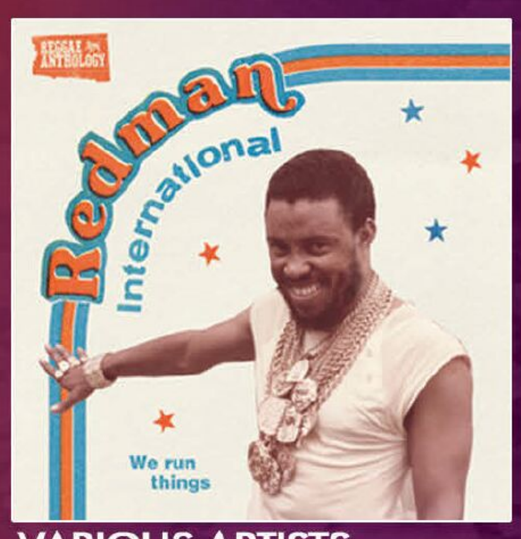


GIL SCOTT - HERON & HIS AMNESIA EXPRESS
LEGEND IN HIS OWN MIND
MADE IN GERMANY

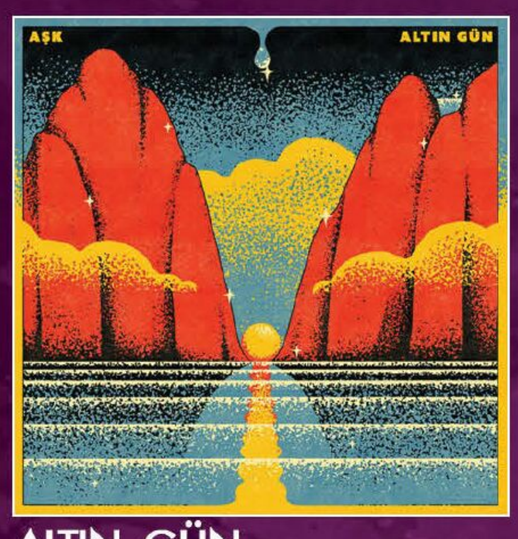
ALLAH - LAS
ZUMA 85
INNOVATIVE LEISURE



NICK WATERHOUSE
THE FOOLER
INNOVATIVE LEISURE

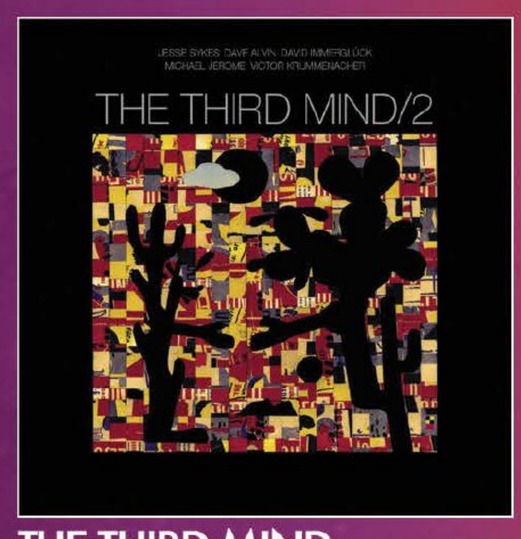


VARIOUS ARTISTS
REDMAN INTERNATIONAL: WE RUN TINGS
17 NORTH PARADE



ALTIN GÜN
AŞK
GLITTERBEAT

DADDY LONG LEGS
STREET SERMONS
YEP ROC



THE THIRD MIND
THE THIRD MIND 2
YEP ROC

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS
COMPLETE DIRTY SOUTH
NEW WEST

THE NECKS
TRAVEL
NORTHERN SPY

GONG
UNENDING ASCENDING
KSCOPE

HERMETO PASCOAL
HERMETO
FAR OUT

THOSE PRETTY WRONGS
HOLIDAY CAMP
CURATION RECORDS

VARIOUS ARTISTS
PERU SELVATICO - SONIC EXPEDITION INTO THE PERUVIAN AMAZON 1972-1986
ANALOG AFRICA

VIVIAN STANSHALL
DOG HOWL IN TUNE
MADFISH

JOHN MAYALL WITH ERIC CLAPTON
BLUES BREAKERS
DECCA / PROPER

Old Friends

VIC TEMPLAR can't fault the music but loses his way during the journey

THE KINKS
The Journey Part 2
★★★★

BMG 2-CD/2-LP

I refer the right honourable reader to Mr Morten's review of *The Journey Part 1* (*Shindig!* #138). The Kontinuing Kronikles of The Kinks at 60 finds the brothers Davies and drummer Mick Avory celebrating by kurating the band's journey in the form of a selection of tracks from 1964-75, grouped into four themes.

Where *Part 1* was "Songs about becoming a man, the search for adventure, finding an identity and a girl," *The Journey Part 2* – 34 tracks on two CDs or 27 tracks on four sides of vinyl – is altogether darker and world-weary, reading not unlike Lindsay Anderson's *O Lucky Man!* with Malcolm McDowell's Mick Travis cast as 'The Journeyman'. The four sides are subtitled: *The World Around The Journeyman Starts To Crumble As His Life Is Turned Upside Down; The Journeyman Is Led Astray By Ghosts And A Dark Angel; Our Journeyman Is Seduced By Those Ghosts And Demons Of The Underworld And Searches For His Lost Innocence;* and finally, *Despair Turns To Elation As Journeyman Overcomes His Fear. Reunites With Old Friends.*

Does this concept hang together or make any sense? Well, it undoubtedly *reunites with old friends*. However, the accompanying eight-page booklet devotes just two of its pages to track by track commentary from Ray, Dave and Mick, in which little effort is made to justify matching the tracks selected to the supposed odyssey. As the target market for this package is presumably long-term Kink kollectors who hang on their heroes' every utterance, what we're served is a banquet from the cupboard of Mrs Hubbard. Come on now, boys... more insight please!

With 10 photos, not one of which is previously unseen by Kinks aficionados, the booklet is frankly a disappointment. Three live cuts from June '75's *Soap Opera* plus three new mixes won't accelerate any pulses. The music within is solid gold five star, but the Abbey Road four, for example, give far better bang for your reissue buck. And yes, it *is* a fair comparison. This band was often every bit as good as The Beatles. They are equally loved and warrant similar archaeology.

On the one hand, are we asking too much of these guys, who've enriched our lives no end since the day we were born, in many instances? The brothers can claim to have already served us their recollections in *X-Ray*, *Kink* and *Living On A Thin Line*. On the other hand, they're expecting us to shell out once again for songs we already own on all the individual albums, bought again on CD, have on old *Golden Hour* sets, the *Anthology* box and possibly more.

Whatever star rating appears at the top of the page, I repeat, the music you're buying, should you purchase, is five-star. Seventies rockers 'Preservation', 'Money Talks' and '20th Century Man' rub shoulders with heyday klassics 'Till The End Of The Day', 'David Watts' and 'Two Sisters', juxtapositions that raise eyebrows on paper but do, in fact, work. 'Holiday Romance' from '75 proves a perfect precursor to *Village Green*'s 'Big Sky', as magnificent a song as Ray ever wrote. It's a shame though, with just two tracks from Dave on the vinyl edition, that his jaunty homecoming ditty 'Lincoln County', present on the CD, is dropped from the vinyl pressing. 'He's Evil', surely an influence on those other brothers the Maels, also misses out on the vinyl cut.

Kids, buy a *Best Of* or a *Golden Hour* from your local second-hand dealer. Then begin a lifetime of investigating the katalogue. Die-hards, buy and file it on your shelf in mint condition.

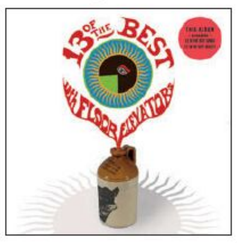
"'Holiday Romance' from 1975 proves a perfect precursor to *Village Green*'s 'Big Sky', as magnificent a song as Ray ever wrote"

Mean 'n' moody mid-60s Kinks

Lucky 13. The Elevators unwittingly rewrite musical history

13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS
13 Of The Best
★★★★★

CHARLY/INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS CD/LP



It seems logical that an Elevators *Best Of* should have 13 tracks and that's how it is on this latest addition to the ongoing Elevators reissue programme. Jointly helmed by Charly and International Artists, it acts a taster for the ambitious forthcoming project *The Quest For Pure Sanity*, which promises "the release in optimal quality of all surviving source material for all of the band's recordings".

Produced, researched and complied by renowned Elevators specialist Paul Drummond, the 13 tracks on *13 Of The Best* had to meet specific criteria for inclusion. Namely, all songs had to feature the foundational triumvirate of Roky Erickson, Tommy Hall and Stacey Sutherland, be Elevators originals and contain full band performances. Cue indispensable selections from *The Psychedelic Sounds Of, Easter Everywhere* and the ill-fated *Bull Of The Woods*. What's of particular interest here is the sequencing of mono and stereo mixes alongside specially reconstructed alternative mixes.

Grahame Bent

LES BAXTER
Exotica Absolute
★★★★

RIGHTEOUS 2-CD

Following up on earlier volumes devoted to the work of fellow exotica specialists Arthur Lyman and Martin Denny, this time it's the turn of the daddy of them all: Les Baxter.

Here, four contrasting vintage titles from Baxter's rich exotica phase are presented across two CDs. Described by Baxter as "a tone poem of the sound and struggle of the jungle", *Ritual Of The Savage* (1951) comes with all the requisite tropical and Polynesian stylings, lush orchestrations, ethnic percussion and includes the original recording of 'Quiet Village'. By way of complete contrast, *The Passions* ('54) is an intensely dramatic orchestral suite featuring the extraordinary vocal talents of Bas Sheva that recalls Yma Sumac's otherworldly *Voice Of The Xtabay*. *Tamboo!* ('55) and *Caribbean Moonlight* ('56) respectively find Baxter embarking on further musical travels to faraway destinations and lending his distinctive lounge touch to a selection of predominantly Latin popular classics.

Grahame Bent

CRABBY APPLETON
Go Back: The Anthology
★★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 2-CD

You have to feel a bit sorry for powerpop pioneers Crabby Appleton. Despite having a copper-bottomed hit with the immortal 'Go Back', they never quite managed to follow up on its promise. The name imposed by Elektra didn't help in the '70s album market, arguably the equivalent of dubbing Badfinger 'Ena Sharples'.

Grapefruit's excellent anthology of both Crabby LPs and singles aims to address this – also restoring 8-track only interstitial tracks 'Last Night In Your Sleep, John' and 'Last Night In Your Sleep, Fred' to their rightful place on their debut. *Crabby Appleton* aims more towards CSNY mellowness than the veiny mania of 'Go Back' (check the blazing mono version) but is loaded with gems including the lovely 'Catherine' and spooky reverse-reverb late psych of 'Hunger For Love'. *Rotten To The Core* is less cowbell, more hayseed, like a sort of US Humble Pie, but still stuffed with tunes. Juicy.

Martin Ruddock

THE DAMNED
The Best Of The Damned
★★★★

ACE CD/LP

When this album was first released in 1981, its USP was rare B-sides 'Jet Boy, Jet Girl' and 'Rabid (Over You)', and that is probably still the case. Unfortunately, they, and festive "favourite" 'There Ain't No Sanity Clause', also constitute the weakest tracks, but fortunately the other nine are all classics, charting the band's evolution from punk pioneers to something altogether more sophisticated.

'New Rose' still thrills nearly 50 years on, and the Weimar bierkeller chorus of 'Love Song', the get-ready-for-the-'80s synth break in '79's 'I Just Can't Be Happy Today', and 'Smash It Up', a masterpiece in two parts, are all bringers of joy. The album ends a million miles from the punk throb of 'New Rose' with 'Wait For The Blackout' and History Of The World Part 1' both a bit Jammy with added noodle. All hail The Damned, previously unacknowledged progenitors of mod-prog!

Peter Gallagher

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

THE DOORS
Golden Album (Golden Doors)
★★★★

RHINO/ELEKTRA LP+EP

As reissues go, Rhino's facsimile edition of obscure 1968 Japanese Doors compilation *Golden Album* is pretty niche. Also known as *Golden Doors* (the sleeve reads *Album* but spine and label read *Doors*), it's the earliest known Doors compilation.

A loose singles collection of early grenades drawn from their first three albums, it dials back the weird but features their epic centrepieces ('The End', 'When The Music's Over'). Pressed on handsome red vinyl with faithful Elektra Japan labels, it comes with a repro of the cut-down EP version, notably both featuring the full-length 'Light My Fire'.

It sounds great, remastered by engineer Bruce Botnick and cut at Third Man, giving the likes of 'Love Me Two Times' added garage-y punch and adding depth to 'Hello I Love You''s grungey outro. It's a shame then that the package's photo repro is so poor, looking like a muzzy photocopy of a discogs snap.

Martin Ruddock

reviews then

DAVE EVANS
Elephantasia
★★★★

EARTH RECORDINGS LP

Reading the press release was a mistake. There it was, right at the top: the deadly, dreaded Nick Drake comparison. With Davy Graham, Michael Chapman, Bert Jansch and John Fahey thrown in for good measure.

Well, you don't want to send a presumed-innocent folk singer to the gallows prior to the needle-drop on the basis of something he probably never said about *himself*. So, grit teeth and needle-drop.

And – what a relief – it's good. Evans (RIP 2021) recorded this, his second LP, at home on a two-track in 1972. Steeped deeply in English traditional folk (he pronounces the word "me" as "meh" – will that do?) he's still not afraid to stray far enough from the idiom to remind one of similar excursions by the likes of Terry Callier or, yes, Jansch. The results only suffer slightly when Dave attempts some studio trickery with the recorder's speed control, utilising neither studio nor producer. A small objection.

Mike Fornatale

FRANK ZAPPA & THE MOTHERS
Over-Nite Sensation: 50th Anniversary
★★★★

ZAPPA/UMR 4-CD+BLURAY BOX SET

Nineteen-Seventy-Three's *Over-Nite Sensation* was, most certainly, the exact moment when – for better or for worse – Frank Zappa became The Enduring Version Of Frank Zappa. He had been through three distinct phases already. But now, with George Duke replacing Don Preston, Tom Fowler replacing Roy Estrada and/or Jim Pons, and vibraphone genius Ruth Underwood replacing – well, no one, although the earlier *Uncle Meat* era had seen several contributions from Artie Tripp – Frank quickly became The Zappa We All Know And Either Love Or Hate. Name the genre? How about Dick-Joke Jazz?

This massively expanded edition includes the 2013 remaster of the album, with the expected slew of bonus tracks, alternate takes and rehearsal recordings. Most have not been heard before, and there are no muddy sounding "obsessive fans only" tracks.

Additionally, there are two full contemporary live shows, in stellar quality, one of which includes the not-yet-recorded 'Don't Eat the Yellow Snow' suite. There are several versions of this release, including a super-deluxe version with a Bluray consisting of the original quad mix and a new 5.1 mix.

Mike Fornatale

FRANKIE STEIN & HIS GHOULS
Shock! Terror! Fear!
Ghoul Music
BOTH ★★★

BOTH REAL GONE MUSIC LPS

Halloween season is nearly upon us, so Real Gone Music have decided that novelty group Frankie Stein & His Ghouls needed bringing back from the dead, so two of their 1965 albums, *Shock! Terror! Fear!* and *Ghoul Music*, have been reissued to an unsuspecting public.

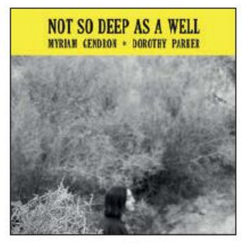
The 10 tracks on each LP are a collection of instrumentals, covering the bases of surf, blues, jazz and R&B, punctured by howls, screams, whoops and other such horrifying sound effects, and going by titles like 'Monster Motion', 'Doom At Midnight', 'A Taste Of Poison' and 'Bodies Under The Bridge' (a 'Green Onions' rewrite if ever there was one). No one really knows who played on the albums, but guitar maestro Duane Eddy and jazz saxophonist Max Greger were rumoured to be heavily involved – that's probably why the quality of these tracks is pretty high.

As mid-60s instrumentals go, these are easy on the ear and worth a second listen.

Dom Picksley

MYRIAM GENDRON
Not So Deep As A Well
★★★★

BASIN ROCK CD/LP



After discovering Dorothy Parker's collected poems in her day job as a bookdealer, Quebecois folk singer Gendron instinctively began turning them into songs before recording them, DIY style, alone in her apartment. The result is a work of sparsely intimate late-night beauty, with Parker's words, Gendron's natural, vulnerable vocal style, and her simple but accomplished acoustic guitar seemingly tailor-made for each other.

Haunting, finger-picked ballads like 'Threnody' and 'Ballade Of A Great Weariness' could be Mo Tucker singing the first Leonard Cohen album, while the naïve strumming and pointed lyricism of 'The False Friends' almost suggests the lo-fi indie of The Pastels or Moldy Peaches' anti-folk. Later, the jaunty melody of 'Recurrence' (similar to Dylan's 'Don't Think Twice, It's Alright') contrasts effectively with the resigned, world-weary vocal. Originally released in North America only in 2014, and now reissued with two extra tracks, *Not So Deep* is a fragile, magical collaboration.

Ben Graham

HAWKWIND
Space Ritual: 50th Anniversary Edition
★★★★★

ATOMHENGE 2-LP/2-CD/10-CD+BLURAY BOX SET

Welcome to the future: 50 years of Hawkwind's greatest sonic testament and perhaps the greatest live album ever, in a handsome new stereo remix by Stephen W Taylor. For those with pockets as deep as space, the deluxe box set also features the original mix remastered, three full concerts from the 1972 tour and a 5.1 surround mix.

Dave Brock's vocals still evoke ancient tribal folk traditions, while Bob Calvert strides on occasionally like a fruity dystopian

Continues over

Dark Glasses

MONK
Through An Electric Glass Darkly
★★★

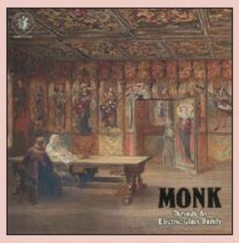
ROBERT NAYLOR & FRIENDS
Skates
★★★

TERRAPLANE
One
★★

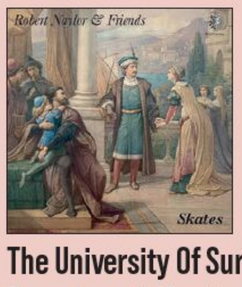
MUSIC BOX
Fun Palace
★★

ALL BRIGHT CARVINGS LPS

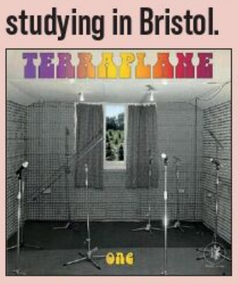
The private press explosion continues apace and, as with all things "private press" these four represent a mixed bag.



Monk's circa 1970 nothing-known-about-it rarity *Through An Electric Glass Darkly* was found inside the sleeve of an MOR album. It's one of those dream records for vinyl fetishists. These teens soaked up everything, from the Ladbroke Grove head bands to the West Coast classics. The playing is decent and their youthful energy and ambition shines through. It's one of those zeitgeist oddities that genre fans need to hear.



Also good is the second unreleased album by Robert Naylor & Friends. *Skates* was recorded in '73 at The University Of Surrey's Music Department. If not as good as Bowes Road Band's similar student earnestness, this is solid. Bar his occasionally wavery dreamy voice, it's a nice acoustic guitar driven album, both emotive and relatively memorable. Think Duncan Browne meets Pete Atkin; posh and sincere. It could have attracted the ears of Ian A Anderson if Naylor had been studying in Bristol.



Terraplane were something of a "hippy covers band" with acceptable, if under-rehearsed, versions of QSM's 'Pride Of Man' and Donovan's 'Hampstead Incident' nestling alongside Dylan and blues forays. If not lweak, it's just unmemorable.

Music Box's *Fun Palace* is an oddity. Unlike Rainbow Ffolly, who somehow successfully blended humour with psych-pop, these weirdos make an odd noise. The recording is basic, at times Red Crayola freak-out and Zappa parody, but there are elements of spooky sincerity and abstract folky psychedelia, heard on a haunting echoplex version of 'Scarboro Fair'. It's DIY and no-fi, somehow pointing to the future with its bedroom primitivism. Very strange.

Not unlike Seelie Court's releases, Bright Carvings albums undoubtedly have limited appeal, hence the 227 copies pressing of each – with no digital streams or CDs, these will inevitably sell. Better cover art is needed though, but the curious should snap them up now.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills

prog nosis

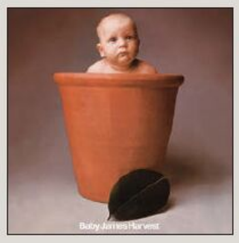
MARCO ROSSI says "yes" to a family of high baby Spriguns

Among the many weird and pointless demarcations that arose at the turn of the '70s was the regrettably sniffy polarisation between "album bands" and "singles bands". Oh please. I've just sighed so loudly that I've triggered a weather front. Famously, Led Zeppelin were key culprits in this regard. At the mere suggestion that, you know, a single might boost their profile, encourage *esprit de corps* and, cough, maximise market penetration, they'd send Peter Grant round to sit on your head. Meanwhile, Richard Cole would be giving it: "Nice pressing plant you got here. Shame if, ah, anything happened to it."

To their credit, their labelmates **YES** were markedly less precious, as sparklingly evidenced on the new **Yessingles** compilation (★★★★, RHINO LP). You'd think their predilection for beaming optimism and somersaulting melody should have sat well within the anaglypta confines of '70s daytime radio, yet they were nine years into their career before they had a British hit single – ironically, at the teetering height of punk. 'Wonderous Stories', the fey and lovely 45 in question, dodged tracers of sputum and nosed anachronistically into the Top 10 in September 1977, despite being more diaphanous than a smoke negligee. Thinking about it, the fact that Hammond-coated cloud-banishers such as 'Sweet Dreams' and 'Looking Around' never even so much as sniffed the charts is nothing short of criminal; and, it must be said, their exclusion from this comp is no less scandalous. Consider your fifth star docked, you unfeeling monsters. Nevertheless, all present and correct are discreetly edited beauties such as 'Your Move' and 'Roundabout'; a lazy truncation of 'Starship Trooper', wherein the track is summarily faded out before the second course is served; the far-better-than-anyone-remembers, Buggles-era 'Into The Lens'; and the band's swaggering, mind-melting reinvention of Paul Simon's 'America'. Here, the single edit is clearly *the one*, which begs the oft-reiterated question of why prog groups had to chunter on at such interminable length when they had perfectly serviceable, fun-size chunks at their disposal. Well, it rather depends upon your mood, doesn't it? Sometimes you just drive to the shops. At other times, John O'Groats sounds appealing.

Speaking of singles, it remains wonderfully confounding that **FAMILY** were somehow *Top Of The Pops* regulars, even with that era's most psychotic vocalist hexing the cameras and an itchy, scattershot, shapeshifting muse that laughed openly at your "file under" bolleaux. **Fearless** (★★★★★, ESOTERIC 3-CD) might as well have been a mission statement. And isn't it just like those awkward cusses to have released more than one magnum opus? This multifaceted jewel warrants space on the velvet cushion in the display case alongside *Music In A Doll's House*. The remastered 1971 original album is augmented here by two discs of roaring BBC session and concert recordings – bruised and belligerent by turns – as well as both sides of the pivotal 'In My Own Time' single, which unbelievably punched its confrontational tone clusters right into the Top Five. *Fearless* finds them cycling insouciantly through a panoply of styles, usually within the space of a single song, and sounding like precisely no one but themselves throughout. Wyrd-folk sepulchres, lairy last-orders roistering and rainy jazzscapes are all fair game. Even when they rock like satyrs, there's something twisted and *off* about it. They were hard-wired to be interesting. They just couldn't help it.

Same goes, in triplicate, for **HIGH TIDE**. A prior spell of duty in The Misunderstood must have given guitarist Tony Hill a taste for thunderous, end-of-days sonics: the evidence is all over **The Complete Liberty Recordings** (★★★★★, ESOTERIC 3-CD). Trading dense and glowering lines with future Hawkwind violin magus Simon House, Hill steered the band into a fearful but ravishing darkness. Or, rather, excelled at setting up songs in a way that sounded like the San Francisco band of your dreams ('Walking Down Their Outlook', 'Pushed But Not Forgotten') before everything curdled into a baleful, over-amped, Hieronymus Bosch death vortex. They were unutterably magnificent.



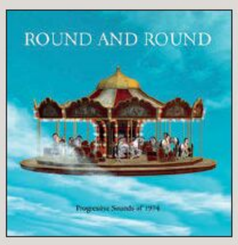
Elsewhere, **BARCLAY JAMES HARVEST** addicts should be rubbing their thighs into dust over news of a new, wardrobe-sized reissue of 1972's **Baby James Harvest** (★★★, ESOTERIC 4-CD+BLURAY). That's a remaster, new stereo mixes, mono and stereo renderings of a contemporaneous BBC *In Concert* appearance plus a 5.1 Surround Sound Bluray to you, Jack. Or indeed James. People often suggest that projects of this nature represent too much of a good thing; but I'd gladly buy, say, a multi-format *Piper At The Gates...* box any day of the week. Mono, stereo, quad, 5.1, ticker tape, Dymo, gas, embroidery. You name it.

Now, despite their Rare Bird/Atomic Rooster pedigree and grave-concerns name, **HEADSTONE** harbour approximately no trace of prog when examined under the microscope. **Bad Habits/ Headstone** (★★★, ESOTERIC 2-CD) compiles their two 1974 and '75 Parlophone albums of cruiserweight pop/ funk/rock and makes for a pleasant if unexceptional listen. Joe O'Donnell's violin provides an agreeably serpentine thread, but for the most part they sound a bit like Pilot waiting for a bus. Which, in itself, is fine, of course.

Joyous it is to see a belated official release for the first two 1974-'75 private cassette/private press albums by **SPRIGUNS OF TOLGUS**, these being **Rowdy, Dowdy Day** and **Jack With A Feather** (BOTH ★★★★, BOTH GUERSSEN LPS). Their take on traditional folk was infused with a thorough grounding in the melodic smarts of The Beatles and the smiling mystery of The Incredible String Band and remains all the better for it.

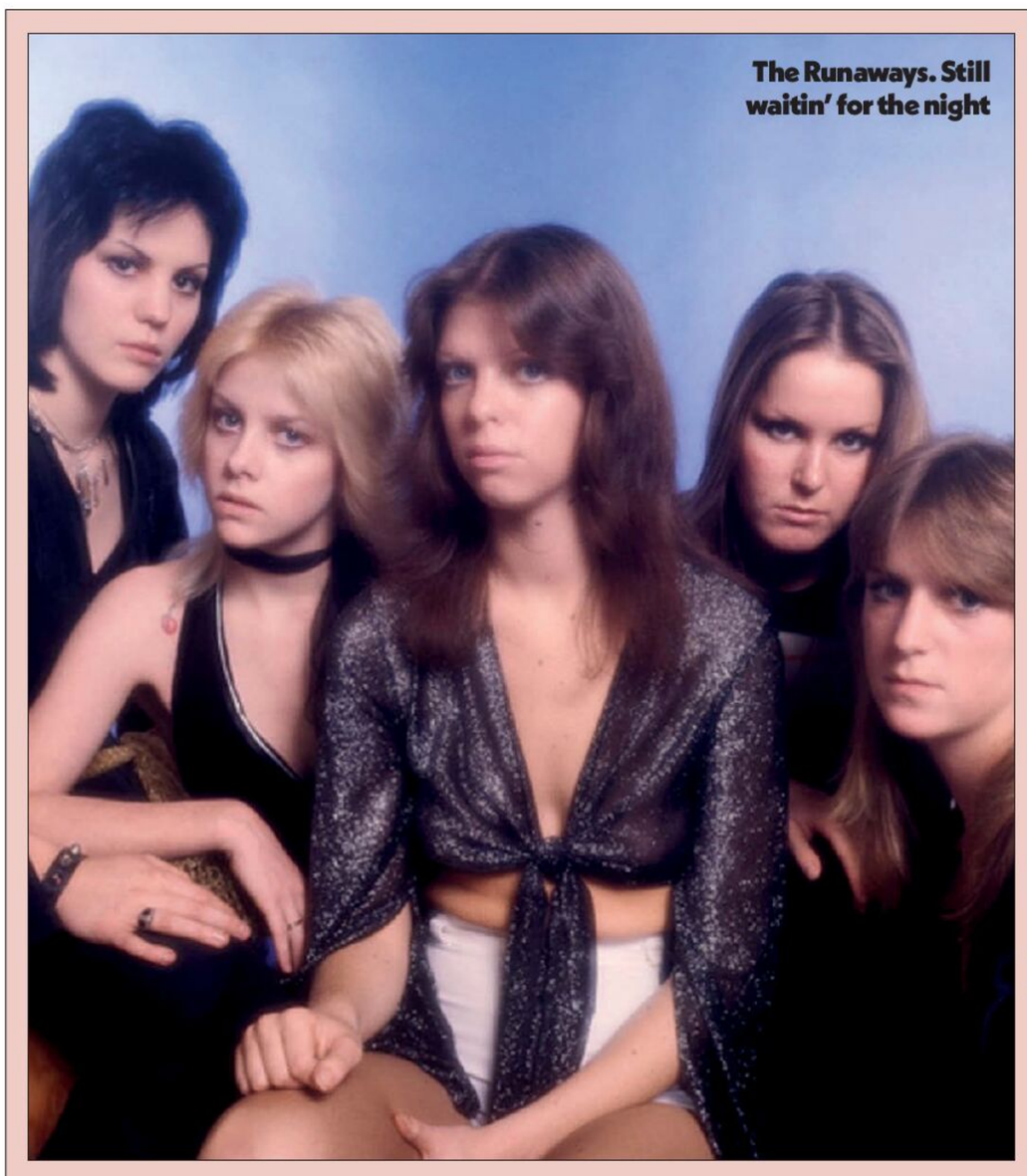
And speaking of disinterred private presses, 1974's **On A Day Of Crystalline Thought** (★★★★, GUERSSEN LP) by **PETE FINE** is a genuinely remarkable thing: a budget symphonia of twinkling acoustic 12-strings, billowing flutes, tiptoeing pizzicato strings and handmaiden vocals. Only 100 copies were pressed in the first instance, which beggars belief. Without major-label funding, Pete Fine was essentially painting the ceiling frescoes in the Sistine Chapel with a crayon. And he pulled it off as well.

In December 1976, meanwhile, roughly coinciding with Steve Jones of The Sex Pistols calling Bill Grundy "a fuckin' rotter" on the *Today* show, French proggers **CARPE DIEM** were recording **Cueille Le Jour** (★★★, LION PRODUCTIONS LP). If you value the minor-chord melancholia of Rick Wright and the sobbing cadences of Karl Jenkins-era Soft Machine at their mildest, you'll be well in.

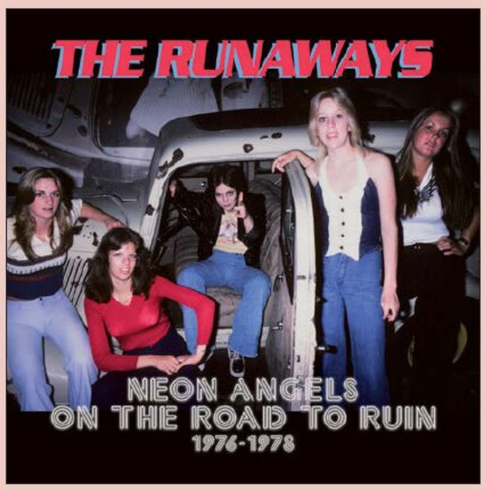


For your homework, we'd like you to memorise **Round And Round: The Progressive Sounds Of 1974** (★★★★, ESOTERIC 2-CD). We're talking Caravan, SAHB, Camel, Gong, Man, Kayak, Nektar, PFM, Refugee and Greenslade, among myriad others. In 1974, that equated to a shit-ton of massive badges. No wonder my combat jacket weighed the same as a supertanker.

"That Hammond-coated cloud-banishers such as 'Sweet Dreams' and 'Looking Around' never even so much as sniffed the charts is nothing short of criminal; and, it must be said, their exclusion from this comp is no less scandalous"


The Runaways. Still waitin' for the night

Queens Of Noise



THE RUNAWAYS
Neon Angels On The Road To Ruin 1976-1978
★★★★

CHERRY RED 5-CD BOX SET

The Runaways were, in the parlance of the '70s, "big in Japan", another way of saying they were criminally neglected by the rest of the world. This Cherry Red clam collecting their four studio albums and one live set demonstrates the world was wrong.

The Runaways (1976) is a perfect conglomeration of glam, powerpop, American rawk and, with snarling signature song 'Cherry Bomb', punk-rock. All 10 tracks were potential singles, including a glammed-up, cowbell-crazy reading of Lou Reed's 'Rock And Roll'. A classic, with the standard of the musicianship extraordinary considering their average age of 16. The title track of *Queens Of Noise* ('77) falls flat but the rest of the album matches its predecessor while offering a more varied tempo. 'Midnight Music', 'I Love Playin' With Fire' and 'Heartbeat' are all radio-friendly tracks that found no pals in radio, and the, ahem, runaway boogie of 'Neon Angels On The Road To Ruin' recalls Joan Jett's then-hero Suzi Quatro.

Live In Japan ('77) contains too many covers and a couple of so-so new songs. A skimpy single album when live doubles were the norm, it is hard to believe the best of the bunch made the cut. *Waitin' For The Night* sees Jett writing the lion's share of material and taking over lead vocals from the departing Cherie Currie. However, their third release of '77 leads to an inevitable quality dip, with Jett dithering between her glam/punk preferences and Lita Ford and Sandy West's heavy-metal tendencies. Poppy 'Gotta Get Out Tonight' takes top track, followed by the band's kiss-off to Svengali Kim Fowley, 'You're Too Possessive'. *And Now... The Runaways* ('78) finds the band down to a trio and on the cusp of disintegration. Nearly half the tracks are covers, Jett is clearly eyeing her solo career, and while Ford and West manage a decent tune apiece, this is their least essential set.

If you were one of the many back in the day who dismissed The Runaways because, y'know, "chicks can't rock", then here – nearly 50 years late – is your wake-up call.

Peter Gallagher

soothsayer, light sabre in one hand, glass of vintage port in the other. The proto-punk riffing of 'Born To Go' and 'Brainstorm' (full 14-minute version) are closer to The Stooges than any patchouli-scented fellow (space) travellers, with Lemmy and Simon King locked into an unblinking adrenochrome groove. Dik Mik and Del Dettmar sprinkle essential sci-fi fairy dust, and Nik Turner honks and trills with deceptively skilful abandon. Eternal, majestic, the space-rock mothership lands again.

Ben Graham

THEE HEADCOATS
Heavens To Murgatroyd, Even! It's Thee Headcoats (Already)
★★★★

DAMAGED GOODS LP

Although Billy Childish's garage titans have released 20 or so albums of stomptastic maximum drums and racket since their inception in 1989, their three-chord holy trinity can be found in the trio of LPs they snarled out in '90: *Beach Bums Must Die* on Crypt, *The Kids Are All Square – This Is Hip* on Hangman and this one, originally released on Sub Pop with comic book cover courtesy of *Eightball*'s Daniel Clowes, now reissued on long term Childish home Damaged Goods.

The Clowes cover is gone, replaced by a more conventionally Headcoat-esque live snap, but the album itself has been expanded to include 45s 'Girl From '62' and 'Troubled Times', now sitting alongside fave raves like 'We're Gone' and Leadbelly's 'Stewball'. Some of the cuts are a tad restrained (original album opener 'Mantrap' sounds positively polite compared to wanton closer 'Rusty Hook'), but when the band truly kick out the jams, it's Headcoat heaven.

Thomas Patterson

HEINS HOFFMAN-RICHER
Music To Freak Your Friends And Break Your Lease
★★★

REAL GONE MUSIC LP

Well, you can't say you weren't warned. *Music To Freak...* represents the first of a proposed 1973 trio of highly experimental pseudonymous discs by poet, writer, singer-songwriter and all-round renaissance man Rod McKuen, and the only one that ever saw the light of day. This new reissue, with colourful vinyl variations including seasonally spooky glow-in-the dark, is its first in half a century.

Ostensibly in four movements, there's no real way to tell these apart as the tempo and even the rhythm, such as they are, never really waver beyond a sedate pulse. But successfully blurring the line between *musique concrète* – snatches of human voice, bursts of recordings in the wrong speed and orientation – and pioneering-for-their-day electronics, the overall effect is exploratory, not quite threatening, more suggestive of spaces and movement. Of course, these kind of experimentations have their place – and their limitations – but this one is quite the curio.

Christopher Budd

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
Hollywood Bowl, August 18 1967
★★★★★

EXPERIENCE HENDRIX/LEGACY LP

Personally invited to open for The Mamas & The Papas in the wake of their historic fire-raising appearance at Monterey and having subsequently found themselves kicked off The Monkees tour, this previously unreleased radio broadcast captures the Experience cementing its reputation as a formidable live act.

For the first time, we have the as it happened flamboyant sound of The Experience on stage at this iconic LA venue during The Summer Of Love. Opening with their familiar take on 'Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band', originals, including 'The Wind Cries Mary, 'Foxy Lady', 'Fire' and 'Purple Haze', rub shoulders with reworked blues classics by Howlin' Wolf ('Killing Floor') and Muddy Waters ('Catfish Blues'), while Dylan's 'Like A Rolling Stone' and The Troggs' 'Wild Thing' inevitably get an airing. What the sedate Mamas crowd made of Jimi and co in full flight can be heard in the polite if nervous applause.

Grahame Bent

LOVE
Da Capo
★★★

RHINO/ELEKTRA LP+45

Love's second remains the greatest half-album of all time for many. The perfectly sequenced set of six on Side One bridges the garage-punk delights of their debut and the peerless folk-rock of *Forever Changes*; Side Two's 19-minute 'Revelation' is bravura filler at best. It's still frustrating, 56 years later.

This new edition offers the mono mix: better for the punchy up-tempo cuts, lacking definition on the gentler moments, quieter guitars and flute on some tracks, slightly longer fade-outs. Standard period mix variations that suggest, to these ears at least, that the stereo is slightly superior. There's a basic mono repro of the '7 And 7 Is' / 'No Fourteen' 45 slipped inside in a plain white bag. Not that you'd know. There's no flash sticker, or any evidence that you're buying the mono mix (the original catalogue number and signifier have been removed). And the first couple of seconds of opener 'Stephanie Knows Who' are missing;

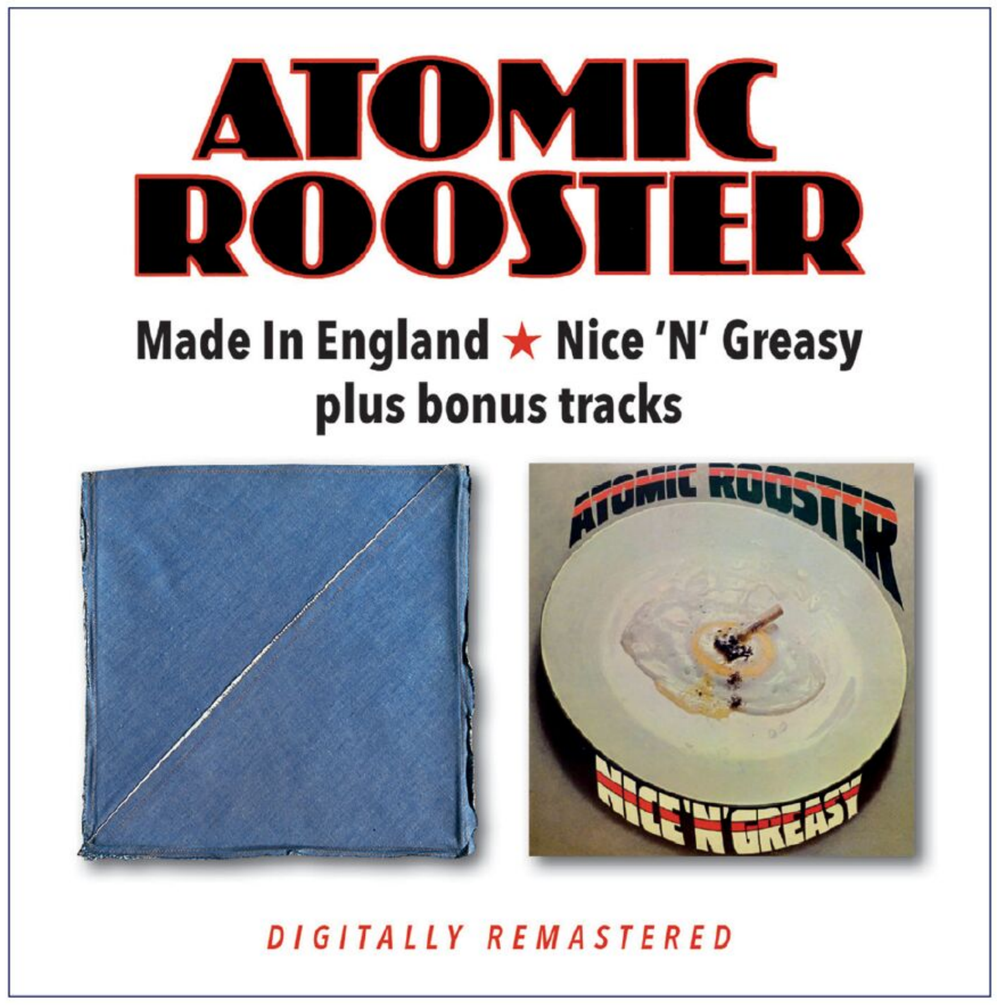
Continues over

THE BEAT GOES ON...

For these and more great releases, visit our website at **www.bgo-records.com**

PALADIN
Paladin / Charge! plus bonus track
BGOCD1501

TEMPEST
Tempest / Living In Fear plus bonus tracks
BGOCD1502



ATOMIC ROOSTER
Made In England / Nice 'N' Greasy plus bonus tracks
BGOCD1503

PURE PRAIRIE LEAGUE
If The Shoe Fits plus bonus track
BGOCD1504

UK customers: buy any 2 CDs from the website, get free shipping (normal postage applies for 3 or more CDs)

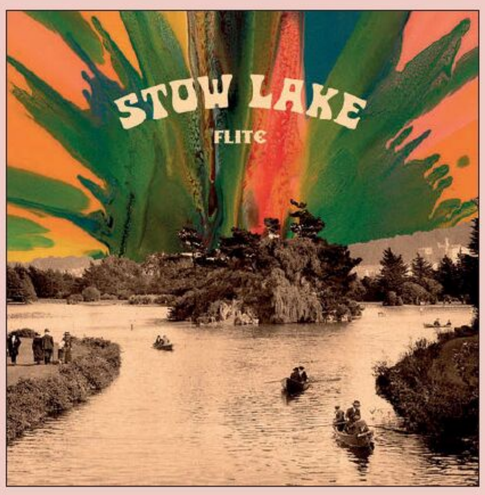
BGO RECORDS

All BGO Records new releases are available from Amazon and all good record shops or online at **www.bgo-records.com**

For a free BGO Records text catalogue listing and order form, please email **mike@bgo-records.com** or call **01284 724406**

BGO Records, 7 St Andrews Street North, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1TZ • Distributed in the UK by Proper Music

Hard 'n' Heavy



STOW LAKE
Flite
★★★★
ASGARD
For Asgard
★★★
HEAVY RAIN
Heavy Rain
★★★
WARA
El Inca
★★★★
ALL GUERSSEN LPS
TARKUS
Tarkus
★★★
MUNSTER LP
VARIOUS ARTISTS
If There's Hell Below
★★★★★
NUMERO GROUP LP

We're conceiving this as a hard-rock box, but if you're envisioning fretboard-thrashing and flowing locks, think again. There's a bit of everything to tickle your fancy here: psych-rock, soul, funk even a smattering of proto-acid-jazz.

First up is Bay Area's Stow Lake with a selection of previously unreleased studio and live recordings from 1970-71. *Flite* is an absolute gem that blends Hammond organ, horns with red-hot guitar work-outs. Highlights include the simply titled 'Jam 1', a Rhinoceros/Chicago-style groove, while the 12-minute 'Truth' wanders confidently into free-jazz. Frantic horns propel a '60s soul vibe that segues into a six-minute guitar flourish. Marvellous.

Asgard's lost album *For Asgard* is another previously unreleased wig-out from '72 that combines fuzz-guitar, electric violin and a hard-rock aesthetic, while Heavy Rain's eponymous album echoes the nascent early '70s British metal scene. Prepare to be dazzled by their rather magnificent and wholly unexpected version of Floyd's 'Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun'.

Also featured are two bands that hail from the well of South American heavy-psych, both embracing the high-pitched vocal with gusto. Nineteen-Seventy-Three's *El Inca* by Bolivians Wara is epic prog – funky, crunching guitar peppered with wistful melody. Peruvian group Tarkus' ultra-rare eponymous debut flames along with its head firmly planted in the shadows of Sabbath and Led Zep.

Numero Group's *If There's Hell Below* offers a funk-laden psych-rock trip through the African-American guitar underground. There's plenty to savour here: low-key wah-wah and a Curtis Mayfield vocal on Stone Coal White's 'You Know'; the resolute political 'Message To Planet Earth' set against a background of funky soul; and the languid blues of Directory's 'World And Creation'. But this is a guitar album after all and rest assured there's plenty of acid-rock to be had – not least by the Lenny Kravitz-sounding Iron Force and the searing, unrelenting Flying Wedge.

Sarah Gregory

carelessly clipped, presumably during a digital file edit, thus rendering the whole exercise something of a wasted opportunity. It's still the greatest half-album of all time though.

Andy Morten

MANFRED MANN
Hits From The Sixties
★★★
UMBRELLA MUSIC CD

This prosaically titled, austerely packaged run through the Manfreds' 17 era-defining UK chart singles (1967 minor hit 'So Long, Dad' is missing) looks like something that came out in the '90s and has sat on a gas station carousel ever since. Not that that's a bad thing of course. The balance comprises the title tracks of '65's #1 EPs *The One In The Middle* and *No Living Without Loving*, and a '68 BBC session recording of d'Abo's evergreen 'Handbags And Gladrags', otherwise unrecorded by the group.

Klaus Voormann's '66 cover illustration of Manfred is a nice touch but one of the many group photos that populate the booklet may have been a wiser choice; perhaps the compilers weren't sure whether to go with the Jones or d'Abo line-up. Where this new set shines is in its extensive, illuminating notes from guitarist Tom McGuinness and additional entries by drummer Mike Hugg and Mann himself.

Andy Morten

DAVID McWILLIAMS
Reaching For The Sun: The Major Minor Anthology 1967-1969
★★★
GRAPEFRUIT 2-CD

There's more to David McWilliams than 'The Days Of Pearly Spencer', but not much more. The Scott-Walker-like 'Three O' Clock Flamingo Street' (also recorded by The Bachelors) is the impressively sideburned Irish singer-songwriter's other great song, with dramatic late single 'The Stranger' and its seductive flipside 'Follow Me' further highlights on this exhaustive anthology of McWilliams' '60s career.

Unfortunately, too many tracks are workmanlike pop-folk and protest-song fare, pitched somewhere between Al Stewart and Neil Diamond, with the mawkish MOR country of 'I'll Be Home' the worst mis-step, while 'Redundancy Blues' and 'Hiroshima' are early stand-outs. Mike Leander's orchestrations bed in better on the later tracks, like the Dylan-ish 'Turn Homeward, Stranger'. A handful of rarities, including the US-only 'Who Killed Ezra Brymay' make their CD debut, making this worthwhile for completists, but the merely curious may only require one of the many *Best Of* collections easily and cheaply available elsewhere.

Ben Graham

OHNO, YUJI
Touch: The Sublime Sound Of Yuji Ohno
★★★
WE WANT SOUNDS CD/LP

Yuji Ohno began his career as a jazz pianist in the '60s before moving on to scoring films and anime the following decade. This nine-track selection of his '70s output, previously unavailable outside Japan, gives a snappy overview of his work as composer, arranger, player and producer.

Ohno's eclecticism is best demonstrated by two tracks recorded over a couple of months in 1975. In one, his jazz trio backs American singer Ann Young on standard 'Speak Low', with Ohno showing off his ivory tinkling chops, while the other finds him teaming up with seven other pianists to form The Electro Keyboard Orchestra; the resultant 'The Soaring Seagull' could soundtrack any given American cop show from that year. Meanwhile, Ohno's best known number as producer, 'Silhouette' by You & The Explosion Band, is a Quincy Jones/Love Unlimited Orchestra smoothie. All in all, some cool sounds for late nights.

Peter Gallagher

ELIZABETH PARKER
Future Perfect
★★★★
TRUNK LP

Great finds never fail to materialise in the ever-surprising world of compilations. This one appears rather unexpectedly and feels like essential material for fans of pioneering electronic music... and the women who pushed it forward. Elizabeth Parker joined The BBC Radiophonic Workshop at the end of the '70s and kept busy there for two decades (until its very closure), before venturing into solo experimentations.

Future Perfect, the fittingly titled first ever full-length to spotlight her work, captures not only a prolific and eclectic talent who deserves a spot among the

Continues over

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

CALIFORNIA CURATED COOL

California has always stood tall, visible from every peak and accessible from basements and backseats everywhere that hope, hurt and harmony exists within. A chrome, sunburned paragon of cool where pushers, poets and pretenders of sound are called to first test themselves before traversing the coastal communes, hills and highways with their musical wares.

From Bakersfield to Berkeley, Hermosa Beach to Humbolt all roads would eventually lead to Hollywood. The country ghosts of the Palomino and the punk ethos of the Masque stood together, electrified and psychedelicized in an all out assault.

CURATION RECORDS

ORDER ONLINE: CURATIONRECORDS.COM

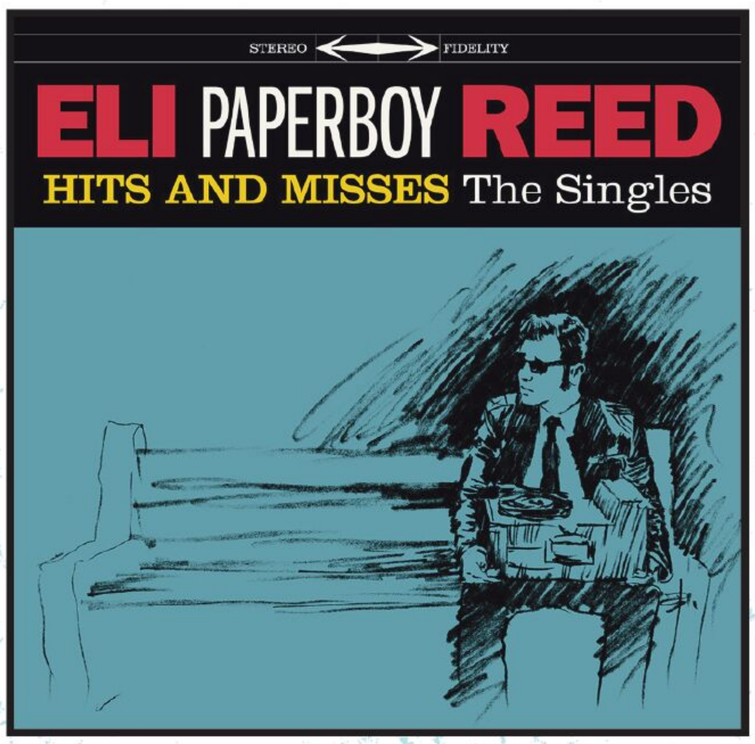
WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION: BORDER / REDEYE

CURATION RECORDS

Available Now From Yep Roc Records

THE THREE O'CLOCK
Sixteen Tambourines

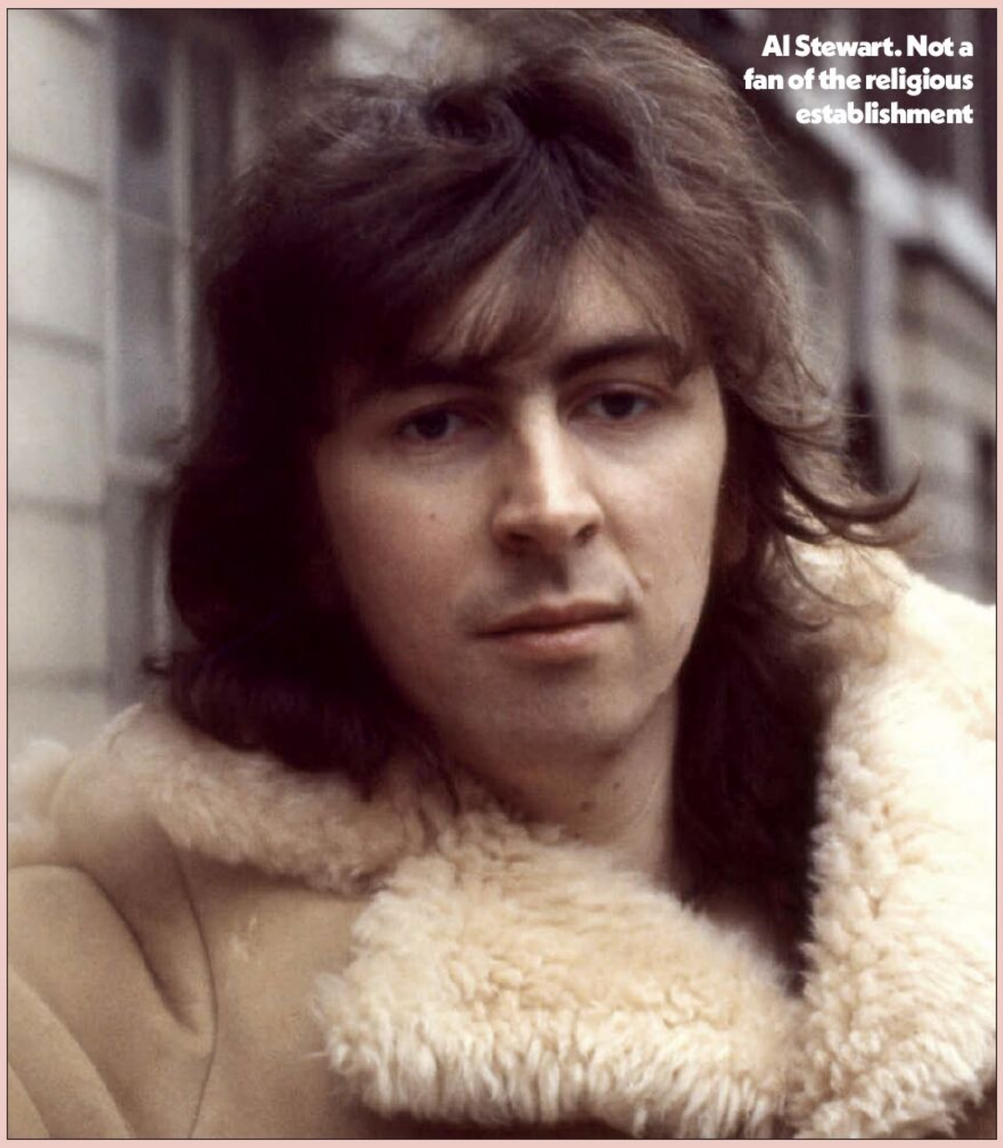
Green vinyl remastered by Bill Inglot and Dave Schultz
New double cover art (no back cover) CD/LP
★★★★★- Shindig



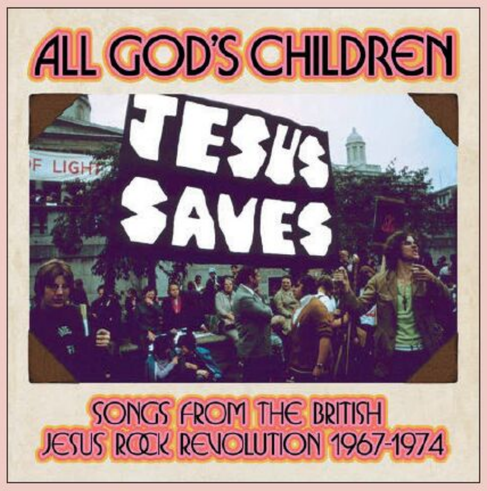
ELI PAPERBOY REED
Hits and Misses: The Singles

Odds and sods collection Features Rarities, Originals, and Covers of Songs by Steely Dan, Bob Dylan, Motörhead,Merle Haggard, Jimmy Hughes, Latimore, Lee Moses,and The Violinaires

YEPROC.COM


Al Stewart. Not a fan of the religious establishment

In The Garden Of Eden



VARIOUS ARTISTS
All God's Children: Songs From The British Jesus Rock Revolution 1967-1974
★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 3-CD BOX SET

Ya'll remember the British Jesus Rock revolution of 1967 to '74, doncha? That musical crusade that brought down the temples of prog, smote the hordes of hard-rock, and rent asunder the glittering garments of glam? No, me neither. Still, here's our friends at Grapefruit, trying ever so hard over three CDs to convince us that such a movement existed.

Spearheading Grapefruit's argument is obscure Christian record label Key and, Graham Kendrick aside, its roster of unknowns – little of its output is particularly memorable. Thereafter the compilers cast their net wide, like good Galilee fishermen, and haul in some big fish, but their role as Jesus Rock revolutionaries is debatable. Bill Fay is more apocalyptic than rapturous, Jethro Tull and Al Stewart fire off anti-religious establishment broadsides, and Strawbs and Clifford T Ward greet the second coming with apathy. The Hollies are here, but no one thinks of them as a Christian-rock band, and their entry, Judee Sill's 'Jesus Was A Cross Maker', is more about JD Souther than The Son Of God anyway. Similarly, does Joni Mitchell's casting of Woodstock as a hippie Garden Of Eden make her eponymous song sacred, and does covering it qualify Matthews Southern Comfort as a Christian-rock act? Lindisfarne's classic 'Winter Song' is here also, presumably because the last verse name-checks Jesus, but the previous one references an astronaut, so does that also make it space-rock? Now seems as good a time as any to remember that while all ducks are birds, not all birds are ducks.

A more honest subtitle might be *Some Songs That Mention Jesus And Some Others That Don't*, and the music is as hit or miss as the theme. Good stuff comes from Roy Wood, Fairport, Heron, Prelude, the garage gospel of All Things New, The Kinks' song that lends the box its title, but with more than its fair share of howlers, this isn't one of Grapefruit's best. And if I ever hear Nigel Goodwin's 'First Time I Went To Church' again I will assault my eardrums with knitting needles. Which is probably more Old Testament than New.

Peter Gallagher

greats (Delia, Daphne), but also momentous decades of technological evolution and changing sensibilities. There are near-ambient pieces that are equally ethereal and ghostly ('Space Drift', 'Memory Loss'), bubbling soundscapes ('Celandine And Columbine') and whimsical interludes ('Congestion Hoe Down'); the tempting eeriness of 'Darkness At Noon' evoke *The Exorcist*, while 'Ghosts In The Abbey' makes the meeting of past and future deliciously spooky.

Camilla Aisa

PARLIAMENT
Mothership Connection
★★★★

BGP LP

Album number four from George Clinton's cosmic funkateers Parliament, 1975's *Mothership Connection* hit platinum upon its initial release, spawned million-selling singles 'P Funk (Wants To Get Funked Up)' and 'Give Up The Funk (Tear The Roof Off The Sucker)', and even ended up on The US Library Of Congress's National Recording Registry of culturally significant records.

Most importantly, it still sounds immense, seven cuts of intergalactic funk propelled by Bootsie (sic) Collins' bouncing bass, horn arrangements from Fred Wesley and Bernie Worrell, and the acid-fried stylings of platform-booted Uncle Jam himself, George Clinton. The whole shebang is fantastic, a silver-spangled party platter that somehow pushes the dancefloor into outer space whilst advocating for an expansion in Afro-American emancipation both physical and mental. No wonder it's been reissued on vinyl umpteen times; and if this version lacks the lenticular sleeves and coloured wax of earlier editions, it sounds as untouchable as ever.

Thomas Patterson

MARTIN REV
The Sum Of Our Wounds: Cassette Recordings 1973-1985
★★★★

BUREAU B CD/LP

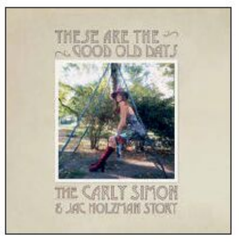
As half of NYC no-wave pioneers Suicide and a feted solo artist, Martin Rev drew on free-jazz, early rock 'n' roll and, later, classical music, but these home demos find him experimenting with keyboard sounds and electronic textures for their own sake, providing a fascinating glimpse into the creative process.

From the haunted empty fairground music of 'Yearning' to the pulsing subway rhythms of 'Dreams' and the distorted, hall-of-mirrors industrial psychedelia of 'Skateboard', the 16 fragmentary tracks span the first phase of Rev's career. Alternate versions of four songs from his self-titled 1980 debut are inevitably the most fully formed, with the ghostly repetition of 'Baby O Baby' especially showing how influential and ahead of his time Rev really was. More detailed info on each individual track would've been welcome, but this is still an essential collection that works perfectly as a fine album in its own right.

Ben Graham

CARLY SIMON
These Are The Good Old Days
★★★★

RHINO/ELEKTRA CD/2-LP



As befits one of the most successful singer-songwriters of the '70s and '80s, there have been countless compilations of Carly Simon's songs, but this latest one is somewhat unusual, having been curated by Elektra's own Jac Holzman using material from her first three albums, *Anticipation* and *Carly Simon* from '71 and *No Secrets* from '72 (alongside a previously unreleased demo of 'Alone' and a rare cover of John Prine's 'Angel From Montgomery', necessary additions considering original pressings of all three albums can be found for shrapnel in charity shops across the land).

All the singles are here, including 'You're So Vain' and 'The Right Thing To Do' but the real meat comes in the foregrounding of easily overlooked album cuts like 'Dan, My Fling' and 'Reunions' that cement Simon as an unimpeachable chronicler of nostalgia and lost love. Beautifully remastered, it all sounds terrific, especially the cuts produced by former Yardbird Paul Samwell-Smith.

Thomas Patterson

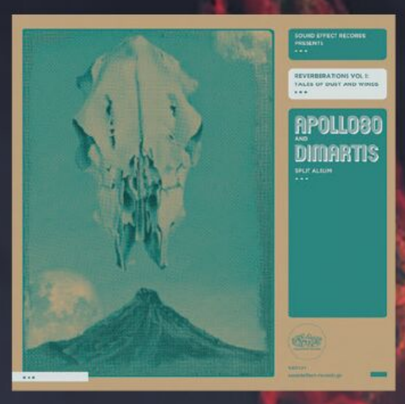
NANCY SINATRA
Keep Walkin': Singles, Rarities & Demos 1965-1978
★★★★★

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC LP

There's still much to rediscover, and at last properly appreciate, in Nancy Sinatra's catalogue. Digging beyond boots, Bond and the classic duets with Lee, the good people at Light In The Attic have unearthed deep cuts (like jangly '60s anthem 'In Our Time'), B-sides, forgotten gems from a time when playful AM pop confections were falling out of favour, and previously unreleased recordings (including the lost Nancy & Lee song 'I Just Can't Help Believing').

The result, *Keep Walkin': Singles, Demos & Rarities 1965-1978*, is not only a strong follow-up to previous hits-heavy set *Start Walkin'*, but also the kind of perennially cool feelgood listening companion you wish would never end. It spans restless years and celebrated producers (from Hazlewood to Mickie Most to Jimmy Bowen, who first introduced Nancy to Lee), and the fact that it still plays like a cohesive, continuously charming album is truly a credit to Nancy's often overlooked vision.

Camilla Aisa



Apollo80 / Dimartis
Reverberations Vol.1 - Tales of Dust and Wings (LP)

From Perth, Australia to Patagonia, Argentina! Geodesic reverberations of the third kind, courtesy of Apollo80 and Dimartis. This is the first part of our new split album series.

Lamp Of the Universe
Kaleidoscope Mind (LP/CD)

New Zealand multi-instrumentalist and Psychedelic guru Craig Williamson returns with an album of classic tunes. Full of swirling effects and trippy vocal harmonies, this album touches the Psychedelic Psoul.

Glen
I Can See No Evil (LP/CD)

Instrumental elegies with the urgency of unrest and a look beyond the pixeled grid.

"Turn the sound off on any news channel and let this be the score"
- R. Allen, A Closer Listen

Diesel Cindy
Spill The Dirt (LP)

Old school '60s-to-'80s garage assault, in a contemporary manner and with an intense post-punk twist! The Athens quartet's debut brings the rock back to garage.

Cosmic Shadows
S/T (LP)

Debut album from new Athens garage disciples. Driven by groovy beats and lysergic leads and fueled by fuzz-laden, menacing riffs, it is a melodic, stomping, garage assault.

Coming up in 2023:

Magick Brother & Mystic Sister - *Tarot 1*
Oslo Tapes - *Staring At The Sun Before Going Blind*

Coming up in early 2024:

Magick Brother & Mystic Sister - *Tarot 2*
Iron Blanket - *Astral Wanderer*
Chapter 24 - *Tin Invaders*
Chapter 24 - *The Black Baron Strikes Back*

SOUND EFFECT RECORDS

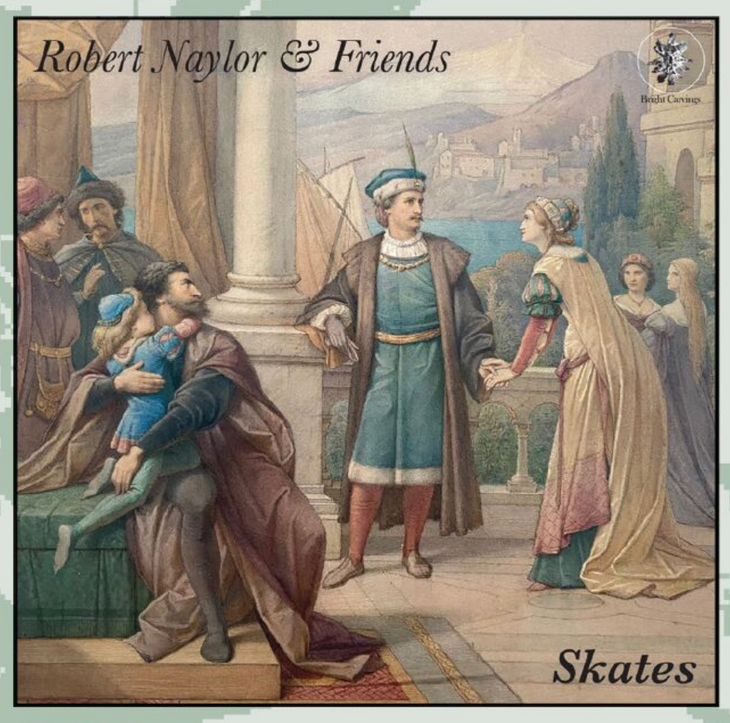
• record store
• mail order
• label
• distribution

www.soundeffect-records.gr

Autumn 2023 Releases

Limited (227 copies) vinyl LPs

BCLP003 - Terraplane One
1970 Private Press LP
West Coast inflected psychedelic blues rock



BCLP004 - Robert Naylor: Skates
Unreleased 1973 LP
Self-composed Chamber Folk-Rock

Orders, audio samples and information
www.brightcarvings.com or info@brightcarvings.com
or via Discogs

reviews then

ROBIN TROWER
Twice Removed From Yesterday: 50th Anniversary Deluxe Edition
★★★★

CHRYSALIS 2-CD/2-LP

Former Procol Harum guitarist Robin Trower first unveiled his distinctively soulful psychedelic blues sound on this, The Robin Trower Band's 1973 debut. Now issued in expanded form with an album's worth of B-sides, alternatives and rough mixes plus a John Peel BBC session from March '73, this is a must have for all committed Trower fans.

An equally important ingredient of the classic Robin Trower sound was always the memorably soulful voice of one time Stone The Crows bassist James Dewar, and he's heard to stunning effect throughout the album at their most soulful and bluesiest – 'I Can't Wait Much Longer', 'Hannah', 'Man Of The World' – and their most overtly psychedelic – the meandering trance-like 'Daydream' and the title track.

While a highly accomplished album in its own right *Twice Removed From Yesterday* set Robin Trower up perfectly for his defining masterpiece *Bridge Of Sighs,* which would follow a year later.

Grahame Bent

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Bob Stanley Presents London A-Z 1962-1973
★★★★★

ACE CD

Geographically themed compilations can be a tall order, especially if you're trying to follow a route. Luckily the latest collection from pop superbrain Bob Stanley is an inspired round-up of London-centric tunes drawn from the "long '60s", based around the dog-eared *London A-Z* books that used to haunt telephone tables. One striking thing about *London A-Z 1962-73* is just how many top-drawer folky odes the corners of The Big Smoke inspired.

These are well-represented with efforts from Bert 'n' John and John & Bev, to Ralph McTell (not *that* one) and Magna Carta. The presence of all this goodness helps foreground the likes of the stirring jangly (faintly Velvets-y) superpop of Barbara Ruskin's 'Euston Station', the fey mopeyness of Bulldog Breed's 'Friday Hill' and Edward Bear's propulsive 'Edgware Station'. Full marks to anything that contains Cilla Black, Quintessence and Humble Pie's spacey boogie 'Beckton Dumps'. Ingenious and poignant stuff.

Martin Ruddock

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Bobby Gillespie Presents I Still Can't Believe You're Gone
★★★★

ACE LP/CD

Eight years on from 2015 collection *Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down,* head Primal Bobby Gillespie returns with more downer classics. *I Still Can't Believe You're Gone*, titled after Willie Nelson's exquisite 1974 weeper, casts perhaps a wider net than its predecessor.

Alongside old favourites like Mott (the cosmic bereftness of 'When My Mind's Gone'), Lee Hazlewood's 'Wait And See' (with Lee cooing "It's gonna be alright" like the ferryman leading a day trip to the underworld) and the Dead's immortal 'Brokedown Palace', nestle bleak gems like Dylan's noirish 'Love Sick' and Nick Cave's solemn take on 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix'. There are also dark pearls like Percy Sledge's country-soul take on Buffalo Springfield's 'Kind Woman' and Thin Lizzy's still-chilling 'Shades Of A Blue Orphanage'. Pick of the set is The Chi-Lites' startling, eerie 'The Coldest Days Of My Life Pt 1'. Feelgood feelbad music for a moody autumn.

Martin Ruddock

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Shake! Sixties Brit Mod Nuggets
★★★★

STRAWBERRY 2-LP

Acting as both a sampler to the Strawberry/Cherry Red catalogue of mod-centric titles and an introduction to the mid-60s sounds that continue to fill dancefloors worldwide, this 34-track double leans towards up-tempo grooves and freakbeat rave-ups.

Broadly themed – R&B, beat, soul, late '60s club sounds – across its four sides, we find rough and ready beat merchants The Others, In Crowd, Artwoods and Favourite Sons cranking up the amps while Rod Stewart, Laurel Aitken, Carl Douglas and Wynder K Frog bring both blue- and brown-eyed soul. The Syndicats' 'Crawdaddy Simone', Spencer Davis Group's 'Looking Back' and Rupert's People's 'Hold On' may be ubiquitous but they're balanced with enough unheralded and uncomped sides (The Union's 'See Saw', featuring a pre-Velvet Opera Elmer Gantry) for this set to take its rightful place alongside Eddie Piller's recent *British Mod Sounds Of The 1960s* boxes.

Andy Morten

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Shake That Thing: The Blues In Britain 1963-1973
★★★★★

STRAWBERRY 3-CD BOX SET

Following Grapefruit's 2020 3-CD anthology *Crawling Up A Hill*, which catalogued the rockier end of the 1966-71 British blues boom, this new collection is perhaps aimed more at folk like myself whose road back to Delta and Chicago blues began with raw early '60s R&B acts like the Stones, Pretty Things and Yardbirds.

It's certainly a more purist collection and even the tracks from the tail end of the decade remain rooted in the country-blues end of the spectrum. There's the usual mix of deep cuts from plenty of familiar names – John Mayall, Rod Stewart, Pentangle, Alexis Corner, Fleetwood Mac – along with lost gems from more unheralded acts. You get John Renbourn sounding like prime Captain Beefheart in '66, Dave Kelly hitting as hard as Son House, the incredible androgynous moan and groan of Jo-Ann Kelly and even a broke bust belter from Brett Marvin & The Thunderbolts (pre-'Seaside Shuffle').

Hugh Dellar

VARIOUS ARTISTS
St Albert's Dream Vol 2: Lucid Electric Prophet
★★★

LION PRODUCTIONS LP

Lovers of heavy psych-rock obscurities from 1968-72 will find much to enjoy on this reissued 2021 limited edition vinyl comp. One track, however, towers above the rest for sheer unhinged wildness. 'Blue Sea Circus' by Greylock Mansion is all crashing drums, vintage horror movie organ and surreal mythic lyrics, confidently declaimed by future crossword king Merl Reagle with Shakespearian aplomb, though scant regard for key or rhythm. Like a gothic Captain Beefheart or a bizarro Doors, this lost outsider classic is worth the price of entry alone.

Elsewhere, the freaky vocalist on Osceola's 'Makes Me Wanna Holler' raises their game considerably, while Merriday Park's '70 single 'Witchcraft' is a nifty slice of horror rock. If Hendrix tribute 'Hey Jim' by SOS is a dated novelty, then Hindenburg Lyon flail impressively while straddling the prog-psych divide on 'Something Happened'. The blues-based jamming gets a bit samey, but overall, this is a decent archaeological selection.

Ben Graham

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Hit That Bongo: The Latin Soul Of Tico Records
★★★★★

CRAFT LATINO 2-CD/2-LP

Focussing on pioneering Big Apple label Tico's golden decade between 1962 and '72, this fabulous 26-track label retrospective is a wall-to-wall fiesta of crazily infectious grooves and sizzling Latin verve from first cut till last.

Spanning the stylistic spectrum of mambo, cha cha cha, pachanga and boogaloo, Tico's roster reads like a virtual A-Z of Latin greats of the era, with Ray Barretto, Willie Bobo, Joe Cuba, Candido, Eddie Palmieri, Tito Puente, La Lupe and Celia Cruz all recording classic material for the label. With such a glittering array of talent on display the album comes jam-packed with classics and feels like the ultimate non stop Latin soul dance party. Highlights come thick and fast with Ray Barretto's 'El Watusi', Joe Cuba's 'El Pito', La Lupe's 'Fever', Al Escobar's 'The Horse', Celia Cruz's 'Aquarius'/'Let The Sun Shine In' and Tito Puente's 'Hit The Bongo' lingering long in the memory.

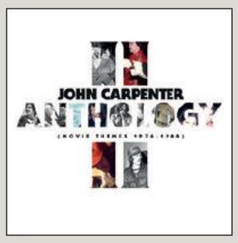
Grahame Bent

Barbara Ruskin's train leaves Euston in three minutes

waxin' celluloid

THOMAS PATTERSON encounters midnight movies, spooky spectaculars and gangsters galore in this month's soundtrack column

Autumn's here and with it the advent of witches and the Wiccan sabbat of Mabon, so ignoring the fact that it was actually a scorchio 27 degrees outside at the time of writing, let's celebrate the season with a pair of suitably horrific soundtracks. First, **JAMES BERNARD**'s score for 1968 Satanic Hammer shocker **The Devil Rides Out** (★★★, SILVA SCREEN LP). We covered the inverted pentagram Record Store Day four-tracker a while back, but this is the whole shebang, pressed on demonic, um, lavender wax, 20 cuts of sinister orchestral dread with marvellous titles like 'Concerned Friends Investigating The Observatory Hidden Sacrifice'. Diabolical, in the best way.



Next, synths galore with horror maestro **JOHN CARPENTER**'s **Anthology II (Movie Themes 1976-1988)** (★★★, SACRED BONES CD/LP). Carpenter's first *Anthology* from 2017 contained all his classic themes from movies like *Halloween, Escape From New York* and *Big Trouble In Little China*. This sequel contains new recordings of lesser-known cues from those three plus cuts from *Halloweens II* and *III*, plus *They Live, The Fog* and three lost numbers from *The Thing*. Not as compelling as the classic-stuffed original, but there remain plenty of electronic delights within.

Speaking of electronic delights, how about the digital only release of modular main man **MORT GARSON**'s soundtrack to lowkey 1974 blaxploitation flick **Black Eye** (★★★★, SACRED BONES DIGITAL)? Cues from the film appeared on recent Garson comp *Journey To The Moon And Beyond*, but now you can check out the entire soundtrack, replete with wah-wah heavy title track and the groovy funk of 'Chase The Hippie Up A Tree'. Horn-heavy joy.

A quick shout-out to another digital-only release, **FRANCIS MONKMAN**'s score to classic Brit gangster flick **The Long Good Friday** (★★★★, SILVA SCREEN DIGITAL), which belongs in any self-respecting soundtrack fan's library (and this time comes in both mono and stereo), before we reach this month's pinnacle: **ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY**'s **El Topo** (★★★★★, ABKCO LP) and **The Holy Mountain** (★★★★, ABKCO 2-LP). *Shindig!* envies anyone who hasn't seen either of these midnight movie classics and urges you to check them out ASAP (ideally on the big screen, where their hallucinatory joys can't be diminished by mobile phones and multiple loo breaks). In the meantime, pick up the soundtracks, both of which have been reissued numerous times by labels like Real Gone and Finders Keepers, but this time come on ABKCO in handsome gatefold editions with new liners, gloriously remastered. *El Topo* is the more conventional, a pastiche of spaghetti western tropes, but *Holy Mountain*, co-written with Don Cherry and Ronald Frangipane, is a freaked-out dazzler, all mystical chants, orchestral dervishes and, in track 'Psychedelic Weapons', acid-fried rock of the wildest order.

Finders Keepers may not be behind the Jodorowsky reissues this time, but instead they're reissuing another classic from their back-catalogue, the soundtrack to 1971 Polish *avant-garde* drama **Third Part Of The Night** (★★★★, FINDERS KEEPERS 10-INCH) by **ANDRZEJ KORZYNSKI**, a composer whose work is now a mainstay for FK. This soundtrack contains thrilling tangos and sinister spy-movie type themes, but really we're here for the opening/closing track 'Czolowica', a fuzz heavy, organ-led psychedelique dancefloor groover. Get thee to *Le Beat Bespoke*, stat!

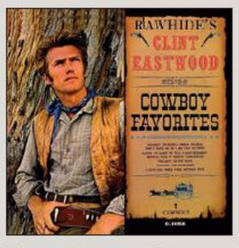
To Belgium and **The Belgian Soundtrack: A Musical Connection Of Belgium With Cinema 1961-1979** (★★★★, SDBAN CD/LP), 16 cues from Belgian movies from lesser-known composers alongside big hitters such as Quincy Jones, Martial Solal and Krzysztof Komeda. Sometimes the Belgian connection is a tad forced (the Jones cue from US thriller *The Getaway* is included as Belgian harmonica great Toots Thielemana plays on it), but this is nonetheless a nicely freewheeling selection, littered with gems like *Sound Gallery*-esque 'De Discotheek' from Bert Paige.

A hop over to Italy and three from label Four Flies. First two are 45s: **GIANNI MARCHETTI**'s **Milano, Il Clan Dei Calabresi** (★★★★, FOUR FLIES 45) and **CARLOS PES CON I MARC**'s **4 Un Uomo Dalla Pelle Dura** (★★★★, FOUR FLIES 45). The Marchetti 45 springs from a 1974 crime flick called *The Last Desperate Hours* in English, featuring a breakbeat-heavy reimagining of Quincy Jones' *Ironside* theme on the A-side and some proggy, horny jazz-funk on the flip; the second seven, from '72 movie *The Boxer*, didn't actually appear on the original soundtrack, a surprise as both cues are terrific, acoustic funk on one side, cocktail bossa-nova on the other, all played by Pes and his crack band I Marc 4.

Finally, a full length, **GIULIANO SORGINI**'s **Scappo Per Cantare** (★★★★, FOUR FLIES LP), the soundtrack to a semi-psychedelic musical comedy first broadcast on TV in 1971, most probably recorded in conjunction with Sorgini's occasional collaborator Alessandro Alessandroni. This is the platonic ideal of the '70s Italian soundtrack/library album, awash with seductive vocal harmonies, floating basslines, trilling harpsichords and distorted backgrounds. Meravigliosa!

Another Italian soundtrack as we head into the final stretch, this time a contemporary one from *Shindig!* pals **CALIBRO 35** and their score to detective show **Blanca: Second Stagione** (★★★★, RECORD KICKS LP). Kicking off with Bond-a-like opener 'When The World Is Feeling Blind', the album spirals through frantic chase numbers, moody interrogation cues and taut funk instros, all of which could belong on one of Calibro 35's non-soundtrack albums.

Next, one for indie kids of a certain vintage, **THE FOLK IMPLOSION**'s **Music For KIDS** (★★★★, DOMINO CD/2-LP), the soundtrack to Larry Clark's HIV/NYC skateboarding teens drama from 1995 composed by Sebadoh's Lou Barlow and cohort John Davis. Lead single 'Natural One' was a hit at the time, but the album is chock full of '90s-style belters: a little bit of trip-hop, a sprinkling of lo-fi hardcore and remixes from era-specific heroes such as UNKLE and The Dust Brothers.



Finally, an oddity from 1962, **CLINT EASTWOOD**'s **Rawhide's Clint Eastwood Sings Cowboy Favorites** (★★★, ABKCO LP), a selection of dusty cowpoke ballads like 'Don't Fence Me In' performed by the Hollywood legend long before Sergio Leone, Harry Callahan, jazz piano and even *Paint Your Wagon*. Eastwood has a pleasing enough voice, and his version of 'Tumbling Tumbleweeds' is eerie enough for a David Lynch movie, but this is mostly MOR gear, one really for Eastwood fanatics only. It does come with a poster of the great man, and is pressed on dark brown vinyl, perfect for the autumnal season...

reviews now

A multitude of new music

A Rose By Any Other Name

LARGE PLANTS
The Thorn
★★★★★

GHOST BOX CD/LP

The natural world is a source of great inspiration but it's also cruel and implacable. It's not all pretty flowers and majestic oaks, and it's easy to forget that we, as human beings, are part of nature too.

The Thorn is the work of an artist trying to find themselves in and through nature. Jack Sharp's musical identity has been deliberately fluid since Wolf People split, performing under his own name as a folk singer and playing guitar in Project Gemini, but Large Plants has emerged as his primary vehicle, both a solo recording project and a live band of which he's very much the leader. On this second album, Sharp uses the imagery of nature and history as an anchor in a shifting, rootless world.

Over 11 relatively short songs, we repeatedly encounter themes of perseverance, doubt, quiet ferocity and the struggle to maintain relationships under pressure. From the knotty psych-folk riffing and breakbeat-friendly drumming of 'Tendril' to soaring lament 'Wasted And Tired', this is a wintry record, replacing the open-road exuberance of last year's *The Carrier* with hard determination. The title track celebrates the tough, defensive side of nature, not always attractive but protective and necessary. 'The Death Of Pliny' and 'White Horse' meanwhile suggest someone struggling with encroaching darkness and unwilling to let anyone get too close.

That's not to say there aren't moments of air-punching joy, musically at least: witness the proggy twin lead guitars of 'This Lock Will Hold' or the propulsive tumbling riffs of 'No Time To Make It Right'. But on 'Every Single Day', buzzing synths bring an unsettling dystopian modernity, with a broken rhythm capturing the disconnect of our contemporary, technology-driven existence. It's closer to Add N To (X) than Wishbone Ash, and while the closing 'Fire Alarm' may be driven by striding seven-league guitars, the existential dread is decidedly post-punk. Maybe, though, the true message of *The Thorn* lies within the complex rolling rhythms of 'Hope, It Is A Feathered Thing': that the ability to love, endure and be loved must be constantly nurtured if it, and we, are to survive.

Ben Graham

Large Plants in their natural habitat

BARRENCE WHITFIELD & THE SAVAGES
Glory
★★★★

FOLC CD/LP

Last heard lending his distinctive touch to selected moments from the vast canon of Sun Ra, Barrence Whitfield gets back in the saddle with his regular cohorts The Savages for another winning instalment of their regular stock in trade: gutsily soulful garage R&B.

Led inimitably from the front by the huge-voiced old school soul shouter Mr Whitfield and ably backed by a line-up that includes two former Lyres augmented by raucously vamping sax, the impressively re-energised Savages are a match for anyone in their chosen field. As with previous releases Barrence and his Savages have a magical way of making their original compositions sound like vintage missives, with the mood here occasionally hinting at souped-up re-wirings of items trawled from the obscure fringes of the Stax, Volt and Atlantic catalogues. Step this way for 12 guaranteed rejuvenating shots of authentically time-warped R&B. Hallelujah!

Grahame Bent

MATT BERRY
Simplicity
★★★★

KPM/ACID JAZZ CD/LP

Matt Berry has been nurturing his musical credentials for the best part of 30 years – never settling on any one genre, instead veering from psych-rock to ambient electronica to folk. His latest offering *Simplicity* sees the actor-comedian throwing his hat in the ring with library music royalty KPM.

Berry is no stranger to these sounds, often displaying more than just a hint of Keith Mansfield or Alan Hawkshaw in his blood. And so, when it comes to compiling an entire album of library music, Berry could not be more well-equipped – grasping as he does the very essence of what makes this music so endearing. He employs a fusion of piano-based whimsy and Hammond wah-wah on 'Set The Scene' and, on 'Good Sport', courts the hauntological synth currently permeating the Gen X nostalgia boom. The cinematic soundscapes of 'Widescreen Features' and 'Telescopic' are rather wonderful, while 'Driving Seat' is a chugging non-stop earworm. Mission accomplished.

Sarah Gregory

CHET SOUNDS
Changes Happen To Everyone, Everywhere
★★★★

THIRD EYE STIMULI LP

We first met Chet Sounds in 2021, when the Uplifting Bell Ends member first went solo with a self-titled cassette of warped lo-fi. Over these two years his sound seems to have evolved quite a bit, growing richer and more spacious and welcoming unexpected influences.

Instrumental 'Lo And Behold' still opens with a funky bedroom-pop feel, but elements of soft-rock and album-orientated '70s productions soon spring forward ('One Stop Forward, Two Steps Back' has a Steely Dan feel to it, 'Open Your Eyes' feels like James Taylor digging the modern yacht-rock revival), and numbers such as 'Foxtrotting With Two Left Feet' see the artist – who, aside from some violin parts, plays every instrument on the album – having fun with a carefully crafted sound. That's not to say the left-of-field charm of the first album is abandoned: 'Cut And Thrust' finds a balance between weirdo psych and smooth details.

Camilla Aisa

DAVID HOLMES FEATURING RAVEN VIOLET
Blind On A Galloping Horse
★★★★

HEAVENLY CD/LP

Among the highlights of last year's ambitious Unloved double album was 'Turn Of The Screw' featuring French singer Raven Violet. She rejoins Unloved's David Holmes for his first solo album since 2008. The Northern Irish musician/producer has patented a blend of trip-hop, brooding psychedelia, spy soundtracks, haunted dream-pop and sensuous electronica.

Typically, *Blind On A Galloping Horse* delights in containing multitudes. It brims with consciousness, too, both political ('When People Are Occupied Resistance Is Justified') and personal ('Love In The Upside Down'). The 10-minute opener might feel overwhelming at first, but the album is full of surprises, memorable lines, relatable moods, instrumental passages that get stuck in the head. 'Necessary Genius' thrums with the same anthemic quality as Le Tigre's 'Hot Topic'; enriched by a loving homage to the late Sinéad O'Connor, it's empowering and moving.

Camilla Aisa

DRUID FLUIDS
Then, Now, Again & Again
★★★★

COPPERFEAST/TONNES DE CHAIR/TIME ROOM LP

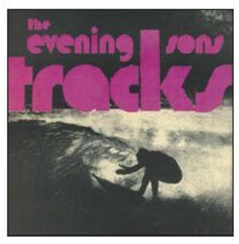
Much of the best modern-day psychedelia seems to be made in Australia. The latest record to back up this theory is the debut long player by Adelaide/Kaurna-based Druid Fluids. While a six-piece band presents their live shows, the album is pretty much a solo recording by band leader Jamie Andrew, with a little extra input and colouring by sitar player Oscar Ellery. Recorded in piecemeal fashion over the course of six years, it's unsurprisingly broad in scope and styles.

'Out Of Phase' is a jazz-flecked psych-rock track which manages to shift into an extra gear towards its climax. 'Flutter By' is a trippy, poppy number based around hooky sitar lines, while the title track gives bossa nova a lysergic makeover. The cumulative effect of such stylistic shapeshifting is both heady and impressive. On this evidence, Druid Fluids have as much to offer as some of their more celebrated countryfolk.

Duncan Fletcher

THE EVENING SONS
Tracks
★★★★

CURATION LP



They might be making music in Brighton, but The Evening Sons are spiritually stuck on a California beach, reached (possibly via skateboards) after they skipped school sometime in the second half of the '90s. And honestly, being stuck in an idealised place hardly gets as joyous and comforting as this.

With their focus on hooks, powerpop sprightliness, catchy melodies and a crisp, warm production, the songs collected on debut full-length *Tracks* ring both familiar and fresh, landing somewhere between Velvet Crush's beloved *Teenage Symphonies To God* and The Lemonheads. Full of earworms and energetic crunch, these songs are infused with a certain Linklater-esque air – in other words, they're comfort sonic food for those who believe that teendom is a state of mind first. Nobody's reinventing the wheel here, but that's sort of the point: there's a heart-warming, invigorating cosiness to The Evening Sons' rock fantasies.

Camilla Aisa

FRENCH BOUTIK
Ce Je Ne Sais Quoi
★★★

STATIC WAX CD/LP

The quintet enters its second decade with another fine set of their signature post-powerpop/punk with several surprising covers nestled alongside 10 original bangers.

Short, sharp, sweet bursts of energetic '60s-inflected garage stomp occasionally yield to lovely, light-as-air pop-tastic finger-snappers like the gorgeous 'Au Flamingo' and 'Motor Girl' – Susanne Shields' flute adding a swinging note of vintage *yé-yé* grooviness. 'Premier De Cordée' brings psychedelic backwards guitars (and subtle synth nods to INXS' 'Don't Change'!) to the party. 'Comme Ferry' is a jolly romp through Roxy Music's 'More Than This' but 'Mama Weer All Crazee Now''s showtune-y arrangement is a too Little Ladies (*Rock Follies*) for my taste. The "pure pop for now people" swingers 'Âme Caline' and jazzy cocktail strains of 'Trop Tard' are nice additions to their garage milieu but I'm afraid 'Tired Of Waiting For You' hasn't worked out all the kinks and is a bit of a shambles.

Jeff Penczak

GHOST WOMAN
Hindsight Is 50/50
★★★★

FULL TIME HOBBY CD/LP

Multi-instrumentalist Evan Uschenko's third album in 18 months finds him joined by drummer Ile Van Dessel and setting an uncompromising course for the heart of darkness.

The blank-eyed, fuzz-drenched march of 'Bonehead' finds Ghost Woman staking out similar territory to A Place To Bury Strangers or The Warlocks, while the tambourine-driven JAMC groove of 'Alright, Alright' says surf's out because the beach is dead. The Americana of previous releases is replaced by full-on '80s goth influences: 'Highly Unlikely' recalls Bauhaus's 'Bela Lugosi's Dead' in its dubby scrapes, echoes and flutters, while 'Otessa' and 'Wormfeast' could've come straight from Siouxsie & The Banshees' *Juju*. 'Yoko' rattles along like a skeletal freight train with BRMC in the cabin, but the album ends on a lighter trio of songs, with the six-plus minutes of 'Juan' actually the LP's most melodic, accessible track; Ghost Woman's own 'Don't Fear The Reaper'.

Ben Graham

GUIDED BY VOICES
Nowhere To Go But Up
★★★★

GBV INC CD/LP

With 40 years – celebrated in September with two glorious nights of music at home in Dayton, Ohio – and [insert insane number] of records under their belt, Guided By Voices reassure us that there's *Nowhere To Go But Up*. On their, wait for it, third album of 2023, they put that belief to work.

The band's current line-up has been together for some seven years now, honing its own, instantly recognisable sound (of which this new album is a perfect distillation). But Robert Pollard, indie-rock's original über-prolific mastermind, still finds way to experiment and have fun: this time around he says no to choruses – and the fact that the songs still end up being unrepentantly full of hooks, and immediately hummable, is a sure testament to his songwriterly powers. Opener 'The Race Is On, The King Is Dead', with its moody powerpop crunch, is an instant stand-out.

Camilla Aisa

HOT APPLE BAND
So Long, Noodle House
★★★★

THIRD EYE STIMULI LP

A quick look at the video they filmed for single 'So Long', and one begins to consider that Hot Apple Band, aka Jack Kinder and Lewis Mosley, might have just gotten out of a time machine. Sure, their vintage look is meticulously clear-cut and the music inside *So Long, Noodle House*, the Australian duo's debut album, wears its heart on its sleeve. But there's enough nuance there to avoid uninventive nostalgia and maintain a strong connection to indie-pop's present.

That said, the two drink deeply from Beatles and Beatles-loving tradition, especially on cuts like the wistful 'One Day (I'll See)'; caressing vocals and warm melodies abound, and there is also a hint of bucolic '70s countrified pop ('Not Today', the cosy title track). Soothing and delightful from start to finish, *So Long, Noodle House* will sit nicely with this year's ultimate melodic jewel, The Lemon Twigs' *Everything Harmony*.

Camilla Aisa

Hot Apple Band. Soothing and delightful

reviews now

ISTA
ISTA
★★★★

SELF-RELEASED CD/2-LP

ISTA is a groove-driven party band of sorts, featuring members of Ecstatic Union, Kunzite, The Lovenauts, Climates, The Jackettes, Cindy Cane and Looms. Their debut album is part rock, part funk, part disco, delivered with swagger, confidence, and intelligence. Its origin dates to 2019 when the various players started a recording project in Brooklyn. That morphed into them becoming a live group armed with an energising set of tunes and a wardrobe of outré vintage clobber to match.

Riff-driven 'Make It Happen' comes across as a three-way mash-up of The Rolling Stones, B-52s and Sparks. 'Do What Feels Right' is a party anthem for our times complete with a mind-melting guitar solo. 'Crystalize' is cooked up around a doom-rock riff with the added psych spice. 'The Sound' is all funky drums, twin guitar lines, with vocals spoken, sung, and shouted. It all adds up to a heady brew that begs to be imbibed.

Duncan Fletcher

LOGAN'S CLOSE
Heart-Shaped Jacuzzi
★★★

LOGAN'S CLOSE LP

Led by songwriters Scott Rough and Carl Marah, Logan's Close have been steadily gaining momentum through years of gigging, radio and television exposure for their numerous digital singles. Crowdfunder-enabled and recorded at Yeah Yeah Yeah in Hamburg, *Heart-Shaped Jacuzzi* is the group's debut album. Originally an aspiring young beat combo, they spread their musical wings wide to incorporate influences across a range of sources.

As the occasionally trippy album highlight 'Dans Le Jardin' suggests, they're still passionate about '60s sounds, although the majority of tracks lean more towards '70s rock and pop, albeit filtered through a modern world perspective. 'Hot Blondes In Your Area Tonight' gives off a whiff of Arctic Monkeys, whilst squalid observation informs the likes of 'Babestation' and the slow blues wrench of 'Gouching On The 33'. On the title track, 'Give It To Me' and others, the writing, vocal harmonies and guitars create fresh markings within the footprints of Apple champs Badfinger, as well as later Kinks.

Lenny Helsing

LUCIDVOX
That's What Remained
★★★★★

GLITTERBEAT CD/LP

The second album by this Russian four-piece is a work of astonishing ambition and originality. Opener 'There Ahead' is a coruscating wall of sound out of which tentative shoots of melody emerge, like a time-lapse film of hardy plants bursting through the thawing earth. On 'Naidiya' nursery-rhyme vocals dip and rise over a post-punk soundscape – part shoegaze, part Sugarcubes – that drops away to liturgical dub before building up to a free-rock crescendo.

'Don't Look Away' is almost death-metal with its ferocious guitars and complex drum patterns, but it's jazz too, and has the tribal energy of The Slits. 'Wandering' starts gently before the trumpets of doom usher in a devastating squall of frantic, circular drumming and distorted, detuned riffs.

It may sound challenging, but the ritualistic, maximalist music on *That's What Remained* is both celebratory and cathartic: a mature emotional journey that's never about noise for noise's sake only.

Ben Graham

MELODY FIELDS
1901 + 1991
★★★★

COOP / NUDIE CD/LP

Back with not one but two long-players (released within a month of each other), Melody Fields solidify their position as one of today's most skilful purveyors of swirling, hypnotic psychedelic rock. Still at ease with Eastern-tinged drones, the Swedish group have been having fun with synthesisers and drum machines, dabbling with spiritual themes and delving into their shoegaze side.

In this sense *1991* couldn't have asked for a better title, its roots firmly planted in the golden trippy age of Creation Records: 'Blasphemy' is a densely textured sound sculpture that evokes My Bloody Valentine, and 'Jesus', one of *1901*'s most spellbinding cuts, is reimagined as the *Screamadelica*-tinged 'Jesus Lover'. On the first album, a dreamy synth-pop rework of Klaus Dinger's 'Mayday' seems to acknowledge the krautrock propulsion guiding the band. Equally concerned with melody and noise, *1901* and *1991* work their magic both together and separately. Memorable trips await.

Camilla Aisa

PETE MOLINARI
Wondrous Afternoon
★★★★

BLIND FAITH CD/LP

British singer-songwriter Pete Molinari has travelled a long way, figuratively and literally, during his career. Now based Stateside, he recorded this sixth album in Rome. His sound has also developed from acoustic country-folk to the soulful groove provided by producer Luca Sapio and backing band The Italian Royal Family.

The album is evocative of The Eternal City imagined in the Cinecittà film studio productions of the '60s. Motown horns and candied backing vocals wrap the songs in arrangements as sumptuous as the overcoat Molinari wears on the cover. Lead single 'My Careless Heart' is characteristic of the album, a romantic lyric and music that bears the influence of Burt Bacharach. There are some interesting sonic experiments, as with the use of a sitar on the effervescent 'Rollin' The Dice'. 'The Rampaging Sons Of The Widow James' is the stand-out, a song in search of an unmade Spaghetti Western.

Clive Webb

MICHAEL NAU
Accompany
★★★★

KARMA CHIEF/COLEMINE CD/LP

Understated is a keyword that springs to mind while listening to Nau's latest record. On first hearing it seems underwhelming, but a few more spins and a persuasive charm emerges. His downbeat indie-country, created with a specially chosen selection of trusted pals and producer Adrien Olson, is characterised by slow-burning melodies, subtle instrumentation, and lyrics that contain delicately memorable turns of phrase. It's akin to what Glen Campbell or Jimmy Webb might write after time on a Buddhist retreat, presented by a band that can dial down into the material's emotional core.

Nau has previously fronted bands such as Cotton Jones, Page France and Michael Nau & The Mighty Thread. This addition to his recent solo outings reveals an increasing confidence and maturity. Fans of Vic Chesnutt and Dylan's post-motorcycle accident musings will warm to this.

An album that doesn't demand attention but slowly earns it.

Duncan Fletcher

THE ROUTES
Reverberation Addict
★★★★

TOPSY TURVY LP

Japan's The Routes have brought out some strange and intriguing platters, not least their recent reimagining of the Kraftwerk songbook; a bold, extraordinary move. Now they're tackling 15 missives by original punk heroes Buzzcocks.

It's not entirely radical to want to turn 'Fast Cars', 'What Do I Get?' and magnificent first album gem 'Fiction Romance' – plus the deathless 'Ever Fallen In Love (With Someone You Shouldn't've)' – into '60s surf-style anthems, yet carrying it out with style, grit and agency is another matter. The Routes, however, are veterans of top-drawer garage/beat/punk so it's hardly surprising that this latest project also delivers, both on its promise of reverberating sound action, as well as a strong image representation; the cover a smart take-off of the Buzzers' highly provocative first single 'Orgasm Addict'. Now if they'd only switched out 'You Say You Don't Love Me' and 'Whatever Happened To?' for 'I Don't Mind' and 'Autonomy' they'd have a totally unbeatable collection.

Lenny Helsing

SKINSHAPE
Craterellus Tubaeformis
★★★★

LEWIS RECORDINGS LP

Named after an edible fungus, *Craterellus Tubaeformis* sees the prolific Will Dorey enhancing his reputation as a master of lo-fi beats and eclectic sounds. Each Skinshape release feels like a journey across place and time and his latest doesn't disappoint.

'It's Real' shuffles along with a trippy folksy style, like a distant cousin of The Small Faces' 'Autumn Stone'. A subtle Stax-like funky guitar lick propels 'The Ocean' in the direction of the stoner sounds of Beck or The Bees. Meanwhile, the '70s-tinged blue-eyed soul of 'Longest Shadow' and 'Care About Me' are given a modern sheen whilst Indian textures shimmer on the neo-psychedelic 'Nobody Knows'. Side Two dips into more exotic territory as funky instrumental 'Zanzibar' tips a hat to the eastern rhythms of Khruangbin, the cinematic 'Ganymede' suggests a lost spaghetti western soundtrack and the airy hymn-like groove of 'Peace Piece' sounds like a lost contemporary of *Pet Sounds*.

Paul Ritchie

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

PLANET ROCK
WHERE ROCK LIVES

The Gig Cartel by arrangement with ABS
PRESENTS

SWEET

FULL CIRCLE TOUR 2023

WREXHAM WILLIAM ASTON HALL | DECEMBER 1
WOLVERHAMPTON THE WULFRUN | DECEMBER 2
HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME | DECEMBER 8
GLASGOW QUEEN MARGARET UNION | DECEMBER 9
SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION | DECEMBER 10
BURY ST ED THE APEX | DECEMBER 14
MANCHESTER ACADEMY | DECEMBER 15
DECEMBER 16 | LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
DECEMBER 17 | CARDIFF TRAMSHED
DECEMBER 20 | NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
DECEMBER 21 | LONDON ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL
DECEMBER 22 | POOLE LIGHTHOUSE
DECEMBER 23 | FROME CHEESE & GRAIN

PLANET ROCK AND THE GIG CARTEL PROUDLY PRESENT

PLANET ROCK
Blues POWER LIVE

AN EVENING OF THE BEST IN BLUES ROCK
CURATED BY **BERNARD DOHERTY**

FEATURING

CARDINAL BLACK
CARDIFF EST 2020

TROY REDFERN

BRAVE RIVAL

THURS 7TH DECEMBER 2023

DINGWALLS, CAMDEN TOWN
LONDON NW1 8AL

planetrock.com/tickets thegigcartel.com axs.com

KERRANG! RADIO

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE GIG CARTEL
AND ACA BOOKING
PRESENT

BAR STOOL PREACHERS

DECEMBER 2023

01	LONDON	UNDERWORLD	14	GLASGOW	STEREO
07	SOUTHEND	CHINNERYS	15	OXFORD	O2 ACADEMY2
08	LEICESTER	O2 ACADEMY2	16	CARDIFF	CLWB IFOR BACH
09	HUDDERSFIELD	PARISH	21	MANCHESTER	ACADEMY 3

HUGH CORNWELL

JANUARY 2024

17 BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX
18 NEWCASTLE BOILER SHOP
19 GLASGOW QMU
20 HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
24 BRIGHTON CONCORDE
25 ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL
26 LEAMINGTON ASSEMBLY
27 FROME CHEESE & GRAIN

MOJO 4/4 STARS - "CORNWELL'S STILL DOING THINGS HIS WAY AND OFTEN WITH STRIKING RESULTS"

Very Special Guests
THE PRIMITIVES

Album Out Now

THE GIG CARTEL
& RPM IN ASSOCIATION WITH
PLANET ROCK
PRESENTS

THESE WICKED RIVERS

"FORCE OF NATURE" TOUR

DECEMBER 2023

FRI 01 SOUTHAMPTON THE LOFT
SAT 02 PLANET ROCK'S ROCKSTOCK
WED 06 NORWICH WATERFRONT STUDIO
THU 07 BIRMINGHAM ASYLUM
FRI 08 SHEFFIELD CORPORATION
SAT 09 GLASGOW AUDIO
WED 13 LONDON ISLINGTON O2 ACADEMY2
THU 14 CHESTER LIVE ROOMS
FRI 15 NEWCASTLE ANARCHY BREWERY
SAT 16 DERBY HAIRY DOG
SUN 17 BRISTOL THEKLA

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS THE KARMA EFFECT

WWW.THEGIGCARTEL.COM
WWW.PLANETROCK.COM
WWW.THESEWICKEDRIVERS.COM

RPM

reviews now

Smoke Fairies. Gothic blues for the Netflix generation

THE SMALL SQUARE
Ours & Others
★★★★

FARM TO LABEL CD/DL

Hot on the heels of this summer's reissue of The Small Squares' eponymously-titled 2015 debut comes this second offering from the US duo comprising singer-bassist Paul Chastain – founder member of Velvet Crush – and drummer/producer John Louis Richardson, who's amassed a huge CV of collaborations with the likes of Gin Blossoms and powerpop legends The Shoes and Tommy Keene. They're both men of a certain pedigree, which shows in this latest immensely satisfying collection of bittersweet pop.

The casually curious should make their way straight to 'Tilt', which bounces along infectiously before building to a heavenly Big Star-esque climax, or the chunky, catchy 'Can't Let Go (Oh, Tommy)' an affectionate tribute to their mutual friend Keene who died in 2017. There's no excess fat here and though the mood is predominately joyous, the album ends on a poignant note with a stripped back cover of Keene's 1984 classic 'Baby Face'. Classy Stuff.

Chris Twomey

SMOKE FAIRIES
Carried In Sound
★★★

YEAR SEVEN CD/LP

The fact that alt-folk duo Smoke Fairies will be touring to promote their latest album in a selection of glorious churches and ruins tells you much about the music within. Formed by school friends Katherine Blamire and Jessica Davies back at the turn of the century, they've already racked up a remarkable series of feats – signing to Jack White's Third Man Records, touring with Bryan Ferry and Richard Hawley and much more besides.

Recorded during lockdown in a terraced house at volumes low enough to not annoy the neighbours, their sixth outing is a solemn, hushed, inward-looking thing that manages to sound both ancient and modern at the same time. Opener 'Vague Ideas' could almost be an old Shirley Collins cut were it not for its lushness and sheen, whilst the title track is gothic blues for the Netflix generation. Polished, professional and pristine.

Hugh Dellar

SOMERDALE
Let's Get Started
★★★★

KOOL KAT CD

Named after their hometown in New Jersey, Somerdale have spent the past 18 years creating their own version of '70s-inspired AOR to spine-tingling effect. That they once contributed to a Jellyfish tribute album (covering 'Bedspring Kiss') tells you where they're coming from, and this fourth album – their first for seven years – is well worth the wait.

If the Who-like blast of the opening title track doesn't jolt you awake, there's plenty more to get the powerpop juices flowing. 'Come Enjoy' rocks like The Byrds on speed, whilst the fantastically hooky 'Better Without Her' could be Badfinger with The Cars on backing vocals. Their honeysuckle harmonies, which sweeten every track, shine brightest on piano-led ballad 'Lulu' – a mournful tale about a sad, ostracised young lady. God knows how the three-piece are going to replicate this gorgeous wall of sound live – that's just something they'll have to figure out when the time comes.

Chris Twomey

THE STILL BROTHERS
The Still Brothers
★★★★

LEWIS RECORDINGS CD/LP

Potentially embarrassing admission out of the way first. The vinyl version of this debut LP by The Still Brothers plays at 45rpm. It could have been a whole different review had this writer stuck with what sounded like strangely downbeat, otherworldly, druggy dirge at 33rpm. It kind of works somehow but there's more to appreciate when played at the correct speed.

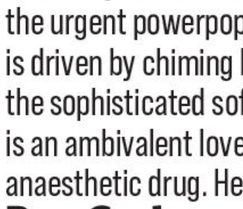
The Brooklyn duo, Evan Heinze (The Shacks/Big Crown Records) and Andrew LeCoche (Ula Ruth) are part of a collective welding '70s soul, funk and disco with a distinctly modern twist. Their sound is wonderfully beatific with Balearic saxophones, programmed beats, hip-hop samples, psychedelic electronics and Saint Etienne/One Dove-style pop. The dreamy, gleaming 'I Wanna Be With You' featuring the seductive vocals of Marina B and the hazy, chilled glow of 'Rest Easy' are stand-outs, the latter notably representative of the all-pervasive post-rave comedown feel.

Paul Ritchie

LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND
Strangers In A Strange Land
★★★★

SELF-RELEASED DIGITAL

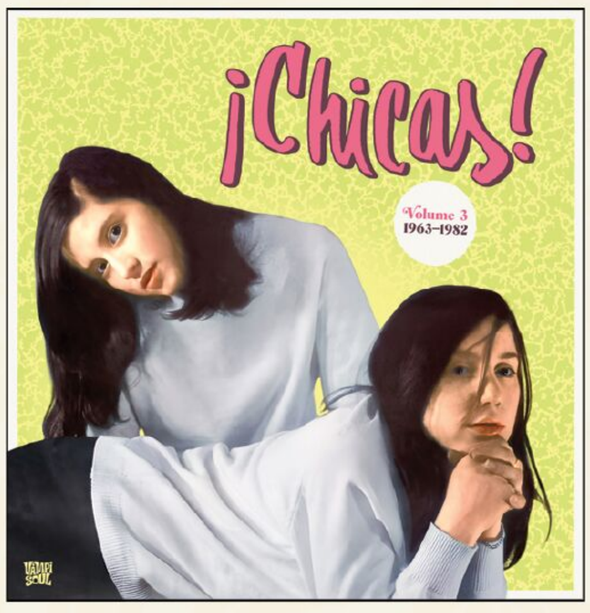


Charting the previous musical activities and connections of Paul Kopf (vocals) and Alec Palao (instruments) could get lengthy and complicated. Additionally, on their second self-titled album as Strangers In A Strange Land, they've roped in some heavy friends to assist.

Lead singles 'Broken Tambourine' and 'Poison Chalice' are produced by the legendary Shel Talmy and feature Blondie's Clem Burke on drums and Tall Poppy Syndrome's Jonathan Lea on guitar, while drummer Prairie Prince (Todd Rundgren, The Tubes) is the third Stranger on the remaining six tracks.

There's a strong late XTC flavour throughout, especially on lush epic '29 Or 134', which also has a Curt Boettcher feel, and the aforementioned 'Poison Chalice', a swirling orchestrated ballad. Elsewhere, the urgent powerpop of 'World In Action' is driven by chiming Hollies guitars, while the sophisticated soft-psych of 'Xylazine' is an ambivalent love song to the titular anaesthetic drug. Heavenly pop hits all.

Ben Graham



VARIOUS ARTISTS
CHICAS VOL. 3 (1963-1982)
An irresistible collection of ye-yé, twist, disco, beat, popcorn, flamenco pop and even Northern Soul! From the early 60s Spanish female singers disregarded conventions and overcame all barriers to be part of a music movement that shook the Spanish society of the period. Many of the 24 tracks are reissued for the first time, including very hard-to-find records. **2LP**

THE ZEROS
Don't Push Me Around
This is their debut single, originally released in 1977 on Greg Shaw's very own Bomp! Records and includes two of the greatest punk rock songs of all time.
7" Single

THE ZEROS
Beat Your Heart Out
Their second single, released in 1978. 'Wild Weekend' is another boss one by Javier Escovedo and it also has Robert Lopez's fantastic 'Beat Your Heart Out' on the flip. **7" Single**

THE ZEROS
They Say That
The Zeros is a pioneer punk rock band formed in 1976 in Chula Vista, California.This is their third single. In spite of the excellence of these two tracks, the band broke up shortly after its release.
7" Single

munster-records.com

MUNSTER Records

Distributed by
SHELLSHOCK

Worth Lambert

One or Zero

New Album from Worth Lambert.
Ten new songs.
Featuring *"Billionaires Floating in Space"*
and the enigmatic *"Stanley Kyle"*.
Streaming Now!!

www.worthlambert.com

SULATRON RECORDS

home of the trippy sounds, neo-kraut and spacerock!
label and mailorder shop

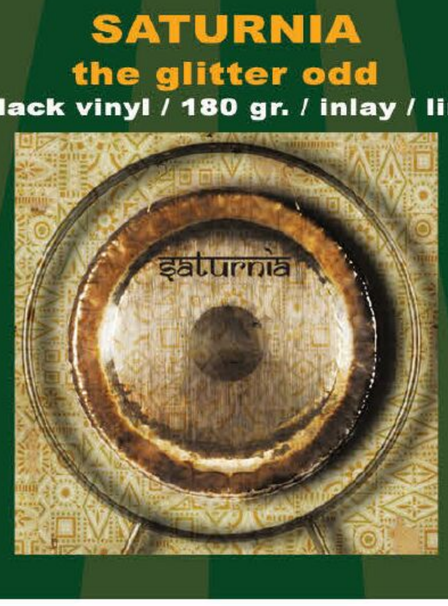
NEW:

ZONE SIX
full mental jacket
CD lim 300 / LP lim 500 / coloured vinyl / 180 gr.

SUN DIAL
messages from the mothership
CD / LP / black vinyl / 180 gr. / lim 300 each!

LANDING
motionless I-VI
LP / black vinyl / 180 gr. / inlay / lim 300

SATURNIA
the glitter odd
LP / black vinyl / 180 gr. / inlay / lim 300



www.SULATRON.com
BROKENSILENCE

tracks

CAMILLA AISA rounds up this month's digital downloads and stray oddities

Another gem from Emma Tricca

When she wrote '**Rubies**', **EMMA TRICCA** couldn't stop thinking about **BRIDGET ST JOHN**'s voice and the mystic folk moods of her 1969 classic *Ask Me No Questions*. They convened over the summer and recorded it together – the result, a hypnotic ode to outsiders that refuses to be of a particular time, choosing timelessness instead. Otherworldly flute from Midlake/Pneumatic Tubes multi-instrumentalist Jesse Chandler seals the dreamy deal.

Speaking of musical matches made in heaven, a team-up between **CRUMB** and **MELODY'S ECHO CHAMBER** makes perfect, delicious sense. Long-time fans of each other's music, the Brooklyn-based quartet and French artiste Melody Prochet join forces on '**Le Temple Volant**', blending neo-psych, warped bedroom-pop, blissful vocals and hypnagogic elegance. Très jolie indeed.

The concept of time – and the daring conceit of measuring it – might still be too much for us to grasp, but it surely makes for stimulating thoughts...and good songs. Take **LAURA J MARTIN**'s latest recording, her first solo offering since 2016: '**Counting Time**' is inspired by the long-gone New York of Arthur Russell and Philip Glass and takes shape in the present, in Liverpool, as a forward-thinking heir to Broadcast's kaleidoscopic quilt of sound.

There are people, like this writer, who still think of *San Junipero* (also known as "the absolute best *Black Mirror* episode") on a weekly basis. Well, my friends, sounds like we have our little anthem now. '**Eternity**', the new single from **DEF.FO**, takes inspiration from that blissed fictional afterlife and delivers a lovely slice of quixotic hazy neo-psych with a post-Britpop drive and Thurston Moore-esque intonation.

Back to Earth, a place singer-songwriter **SHIRLEY HURT** has travelled extensively. After much music-imbued wandering she's now crafting exquisite songs in rural Ontario. Single '**Charioteer**' is an instant highlight of her self-titled debut full-length, an elegant gem of minimalist art-folk with echoes of Aldous Harding, impenetrable and alluring in equal measure.

After four acclaimed LPs – the first of which she self-released when she was just 16 – **FAYE WEBSTER** returns with '**Lifetime**', a new tune made of laconic ruminations that makes strides away from the country-leaning sound of her beginnings and towards subtle sophisti-pop. Arrangement and production, too, are nothing short of sublime.

While **AZMARI** are based in Brussels, their music is decidedly global. Geographical and stylistic boundaries are disregarded: numbers like '**Khamsin**' offer an enveloping mix of psychedelia, wandering world music grooves, jazz, desert blues and all things outré, where East meets West and exploration is key, bringing to mind trance-like instrumentals by the likes of Dirtmusic or Orchestra Of Spheres.

Can't get enough of globetrotting sonics? **TOGO ALL STARS** brim with intergenerational talent, connecting young singer Awumakuga Otu Rodrigue and veteran Aguey Cudjoe, a pioneer of Afropunk in '70s Ghana. '**Zon Kede**' is a driving, instantly catchy piece with an African proverb at its core: "TTo go fast, we go alone, to go far, we go together."

These days, when looking for fertile, reliable neo-psychedelic hubs, we know we can always count on two places: Australia and Brighton. So it's nice to hear that young citizens of the latter have taken inspiration from the technicolour trippy pop of Down Under for a new song. Say hello to **HUTCH**: hard not to fall for the effervescent charm of '**The Bow**'.

With an impressive debut album freshly released on the ever-reliable Daptone label, **JALEN NGONDA** offers an arresting single, titled 'That's All I Wanted from You'. The retro soul stylings are impeccable (as we were saying, it *is* Daptone), but what really steals the show is the 28-year-old's vocals. Raw, passionate, thrillingly soul-baring. Somewhere up there Marvin must be smiling.

The final stop in this month's Tracks expedition has us travelling through constellations. Australian quartet **MILDLIFE** arrange a '**Return To Centaurus**' that is colossal enough (nearly 10 minutes) to contain multitudes: space-rock, jam-oriented jazz, sci-fi pop. Vocodered vocals and sleek retro synths give the song a fun '80s flair. There's plenty to enjoy along the celestial road.

BETO VILLENA WITH WE ALL TOGETHER / BLACK SUGAR

Suavecito / Viajecito

★★★★★

VAMPISOUL

Dubbed "the Chicano national anthem" and originally recorded by US outfit Malo, who scored a Top 20 *Billboard* hit with the song in 1972, Peruvian trumpeter Beto Villena and We All Together's take on 'Suavecito' saw the light of day on Discos MAG the same year. Deliciously sweet, soulful and cruising gently on a lilting Latin groove, this is dreamy barrio soul *par excellence* with its potency flowing from the perfect combination of Carlos Guerrero›s lead vocals and the seductive instrumentation of the backing track.

On the flip, fellow Peruvians Black Sugar weigh in with 'Viajecito', taken from their self-titled 1971 debut album, which injects superfly wah-wah guitar along with other jazz and funk influences into an already bubbling cauldron of sharp Latin rhythms and killer horn lines. This seriously hot 45 is the perfect route into the delights of early '70s Peruvian Latin soul.

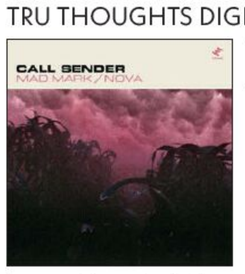
Grahame Bent

CALL SENDER

Mad Mark / Nova

★★★★

TRU THOUGHTS DIGITAL



There's so much talking about how being constantly online turned us into isolated, apathetic beings. So it's nice to be reminded of the other side of the story, too. We would be without the music of Call Sender, for instance, if it weren't for the internet. Multi-instrumentalists and veteran producers/engineers Paul Elliott and Michael Reed are based in Suffolk and in the Bay Area respectively. After admiring each other's work, they started playing sessions on Skype and went on to recording before they had ever met in person.

This single still has the feel of two talented music makers working side by side, sharing a love of library music, vintage soundtracks and breaks. 'Mad Mark' has a strong cinematic flair that is equal parts spy story and sci-fi cult. The dreamy pulsations of 'Nova' make for a more understated affair that scouts the cosmos with atmospheric results.

Camilla Aisa

THE CONTESSAS

Broken Heart / Gimme Gimme

★★★★

NUMERO GROUP

Formed in the early '60s after coming together in a college choir that featured Jimmy Webb on piano, The Contessas so

impressed the rising song writing star that he arranged a trip to Motown's LA studios, where they recorded a clutch of his tracks for a promo LP.

This release gathers together two perfectly realised songs that never saw the light of day back then (though both do feature on Numero's stellar – and now out of print – *Basement Beehive: The Girl Group Underground* comp). With its lovelorn lyrics, trebly guitar lines, haunting backing vocals and plaintive organ deep down in the mix, 'Broken Heart' could almost be a New England teen scene cut, whilst the far faster flip, with its driving bass and Vox Continental solo, is in the sort of pulsing garage-soul terrain mined so well by ? & The Mysterians and Sunny & The Sunliners.

Hugh Dellar

FRANKIE
Panick Attack EP
★★★★★

SOUNDFLAT

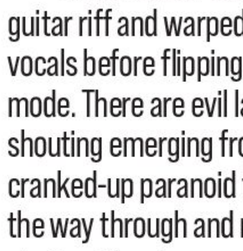
Frankie Fuzz is a prolific young Dutch musician who plays in more bands that you've had pickled herrings and has already put out some of the most idiosyncratic '60s-influenced tracks of recent years. Here he's back among us with a 45 released just in time for Halloween and featuring three cuts that give voice to his darkest fears.

'Panic Attack' kicks off with a fuzzed-out guitar riff and warped call-and-response vocals before flipping into a totally different mode. There are evil laughing voices, doomy shouting emerging from the depths and a cranked-up paranoid tension that runs all the way through and never lets up. 'Agnost' starts with a dense organ riff that's soon complemented by more fat fuzz and, as always, there are plenty of odd bits that bleed in and out of the background. Finally, there's 'Time', which belts along like a manic metronome running faster and faster.

Hugh Dellar

MANUAL SCAN
Shooting Stars EP
★★★

PACIFIC



Manual Scan was one of the many remarkable bands to emerge from San Diego in the early '80s and pushed a melodic mod/powerpop sound to the masses. Although their original incarnation split in 1981, with lead singer and guitarist Bart Mendoza going on to enjoy a long-running solo career, they have, since 2005, reunited on various occasions, and this latest EP is the fruit of these get-togethers.

Featuring original members Kevin Donaker-Ring (guitar) and David Fleminger (keyboards) alongside Mendoza, the title track alone is enough to warm the hearts of old fans and win over new listeners. Operating in similar terrain to prime Teenage Fanclub, it's hard-edged, catchy as crabs, and adorned with an elaborate almost classical keyboard solo. You then get four other tracks, including 'David May', with its winning descending 'Dear Prudence' guitar line, and in a nod to their roots, a spirited romp through The Creation's 'Biff Bang Pow'.

Hugh Dellar

THE MISSFITS
Meet The Missfits EP
★★★

ACE

Formed in 1963 by three teenage schoolgirls in the holiday hotspot of Blackburn, Lancashire, The Missfits (see what they did there?) were, for two brief years, the toast of the town, and even ventured down to Manchester, where they played the famous Oasis Club (no relation, mercifully). In February '64, the five-piece won a talent competition at a local Pontins holiday camp and the prize was a trip to London that summer to record.

For the session in The Smoke, they laid down four live favourites, and then stashed the tapes away. For many years, they were thought to be lost, but have now resurfaced, meaning beat heads can thrill to their spirited maraca-laden romp through 'You Can't Judge A Book By The Cover', the primitive 'I'm Talking About You' and an even more primal 'Dimples'. By '65, it was all over, with bassist Pauline Moran joining She Trinity the following year.

Hugh Dellar

THE SYN
Created By Clive / I'm Following You
★★★★★

TOP SOUNDS

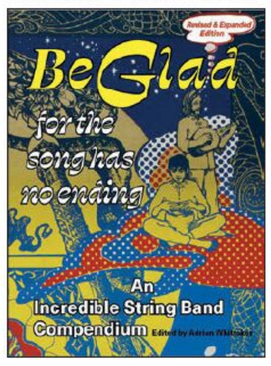
As someone who's always infinitely preferred the brief 1967 two-single flowering of The Syn's arch mod-soul-psych pop genius to anything bassist Chris Squire and guitarist Peter Banks subsequently went on to do with prog monsters Yes, the news that a track not included among the unreleased odds and sods that graced such comps as Grapefruit's 2021 *Flowerman* set had somehow surfaced filled me with anticipation.

In fact, you could argue that both sides are new, as 'Created By Clive' isn't the polished high camp recording of the Deram 45, but a charmingly ramshackle demo that sees Steve Nardelli and the backing singers still feeling their way into the vocals. Flip it over and you get the main thrill here. 'I'm Following You' sounds far more '66 than '67 and is a stomping slice of Motown-soaked mod aggro-pop (with admittedly slightly disturbing lyrics) that almost rivals The Action. Yes, it's that good.

Hugh Dellar

BE GLAD FOR THE SONG HAS NO ENDING: AN INCREDIBLE STRING BAND COMPENDIUM
Adrian Whittaker (Ed)
★★★★

STRANGE ATTRACTOR PRESS



Originally published in 2003 as an outgrowth of ISB fanzine *Be Glad,* this revised and expanded edition (713 pages) collects a wealth of articles, interviews, extended reviews, reminiscences and more on the subject of one of the most adored yet divisive musical acts of the '60s and '70s.

Arranged in chronological order, the book covers the band's career from their Edinburgh folk club beginnings to their split in '74. It's beautiful looking: full of period photos, art and memorabilia, plus comic strips from Allen Frewin and even a quiz and crossword. New material includes pieces on the ISB's first US tour and their collaboration with dancers Mimi and Mouse, as well as recollections from Rose Simpson on working at Sound Techniques studio and the Witchseason production office. The influence of Scientology is also covered in greater depth.

Name contributors include former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, Billy Connolly and Neil Tennant, superfans all, and there are interviews with Mike Heron, Robin Williamson, Clive Palmer, Joe Boyd and latter-day band members Gerard Dott and Malcolm LeMaistre among others. If you thought you knew the ISB, then *Be Glad* reveals them to be a band of almost infinite depths, their discography pockmarked with rabbit holes for the true seeker to disappear into. From mythical allusions to esoteric wisdom, ancient musical traditions to classical and beat poetry, the group absorbed it all and recycled it into their timeless compositions.

How long is a piece of string? When it's this incredible band, virtually endless.

Ben Graham

GATHERING OF THE TRIBE: RITUAL
Mark Goodall
★★★★

HEADPRESS

Gathering Of The Tribe:Ritual is the third instalment of Mark Goodall's guide to the influence of the occult in music. It's no secret that since the birth of rock 'n' roll, devilry and the dark side has been a subject of fascination – whether it's Aleister Crowley on the cover of *Sgt. Pepper* or Black Sabbath singing about sorcery. And in each book of his *Gathering* series, Goodall drills down into one aspect of the esoteric as he strives to compile the ultimate occult record collection. Where the first volume focused on the acid experience and the second landscape, this latest tome turns its eye to the topic of ritual.

Presented as a beautiful photographic booklet, Goodall allows us to linger on the less well-known cover art of the records that he has selected; all supplemented with considered written snapshots of the artists and their music. *Ritual* is more spiritual than occult and so the albums included here are aural companions to a broader collection of shamanic and religious practices. Skipping across genres, the book takes in Mort Garson and his electronic interpretation of music for a *Black Mass* – neatly contrasted with Amiri Bakara's version of *Black Mass* as a vehicle for the political. Exploring Haitian Voodoo, Christianity, Paganism, Goodall even ventures towards the extreme ends of the socialist-fascist dichotomy, while the music studied ranges from classical to jazz to Afro-Cuban – even Carla Bley and Gary Burton feature.

This is a visually stunning piece of work – *Gathering* is both enlightening and fascinating.

Sarah Gregory

THE SEARCHERS: CRAZY DREAMS! EVERY SONG FROM EVERY SESSION 1963-2023
Peter Checksfield
★★★★

SELF-PUBLISHED

Peter Checksfield's new book is one of those publications you thought you didn't need, but after picking it up you realise what an invaluable piece of work it is, even if you're just a fairweather fan of The Searchers.

As the cover states, every song and session is documented, and it's a fascinating, in-depth look into the recording history of a popular group that stretches to over 200 pages. It crams a lot in, from when tracks were recorded, who sung on them, what other groups and individuals did and how they fared (or not) in the charts. What becomes obvious (if you didn't already know) when poring over the details of their output is quite how reliant they were on other groups/singers/songwriters for material, barely penning any of their own material, save for the odd B-side, until around their fourth album *Sounds Like Searchers*, and even then it was only a handful of tracks.

The Searchers' fall from grace in late 1965 is remarkable, but this tome casts light on one of the main reasons why – wrong choice of songs (although some are now deemed lost classics), something that ultimately consigned them to the chart wilderness. The book also

Continues over

Slade. It's like they never went away

details their work in the '70s and '80s and beyond, through several line-up changes (although not that many for a group of this longevity), with John McNally and Frank Allen, almost, there from the beginning.

It's a publication you'll find yourself returning to often and that's a pretty decent recommendation in our eyes.

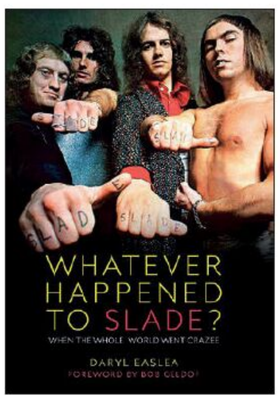
Dom Picksley

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO SLADE?

Daryl Easlea

★★★

OMNIBUS PRESS



"Slade should be revered", writes Bob Geldof in his introduction. "Here's the book that does that." And, boy, he's not joking. Daryl Easlea has his phaser set on gush. Every song is either a "banger" or a "hoot", every concert a triumph. Objectivity is defenestrated. When band manager Chas Chandler destroys a camera worth £0.25 million while verbally abusing *Slade In Flame* director Richard Loncraine, Easlea concludes Chandler's behaviour could "in one sense be applauded" as Loncraine apparently wasn't getting enough close-ups of Chandler's boys.

It'is also clear that no darlings were killed in the making of this book, with every scrap of research and every interviewee's pronouncement crammed in there, resulting in episodes of repetition and irrelevance.

These bugbears aside, in *Whatever Happened To Slade?* Eastlea has penned what will surely stand as the band's definitive biography. No chapter in their history is downplayed or ignored, the author giving equal billing to the formative years, the glory days (culminating in an in-depth look at their creative peak, the *Slade In Flame* film and soundtrack), and the mid-70s decline during which, thanks to their down to earth pragmatism, Slade still shine. Thereafter we get their Reading resurrection, the '80s revival (culminating in their creative nadir, 1985's *Crackers*), the band's second decline, and the departure of Noddy Holder and Jim Lea in '92.

Eastlea's enthusiasm may be the source of my criticisms but it also ensures he spins an appropriately foot-stomping account of the Slade story.

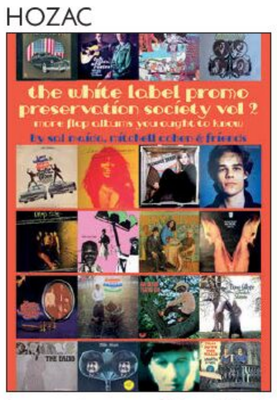
Peter Gallagher

THE WHITE LABEL PROMO PRESERVATION SOCIETY VOL 2

Sal Maida, Mitchell Cohen & Friends

★★★★

HOZAC



Subtitled "More flop albums you ought to know", this second instalment of Maida and Cohen's ruminations on whichever long-players (the titular white label promos) tickle their fancy, when they first heard and bought them, and whatever legacies endure, feels like an informal record club, held in a buddy's man cave with beers and chips. If it were 30 years ago, they'd be running off cassettes of each other's offerings as they listened.

The subjects span 1963 (Antonio Carlos Jobim's *The Composter of 'Desafinado' Plays*) to '89 (Dion's *Yo Frankie*) and mix folk, soul, pop, psych, country, funk and alt-rock with gleeful abandon. It's like walking into a second-hand record shop and having the albums talk to you as you flick through the racks. The writers' American perspective means that amongst their subjects are US-only '60s titles by British artists like Marianne Faithfull, The Searchers and The Animals, and albums by The Kinks, Roxy Music (with whom Maida played briefly in the mid-70s) and Echo & The Bunnymen that achieved chart success in the UK but did nothing Stateside.

Where the book excels is its praise of *bona fide* obscurities like Leigh Stephens' *Red Weather*, JJ Light's *Heya!* and Rockin' Horse's *Yes It Is*, and the easy, conversational style employed by most of the writers. "I can tell you that that *Guitar Beat* did not leave my turntable for weeks," Maida writes of The Raybeats' out-of-time '81 neo-surf cult favourite. Yep, we know the feeling.

Andy Morten

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

PALOOKA 5

空想科学サーフィン

'RADIO TELESCOPES' FOUR TRACK 7" EP

SAT 28TH OCT THE ESPLANADE CLUB, WATCHET
SAT 11TH NOV THE BARN, MILTON ARMS, PORTSMOUTH
SAT 18TH NOV SW SCOOTER RALLY, LADRAM BAY
SAT 18TH NOV THE ELMERS ARMS, BRISTOL
SAT 25TH NOV CLUB KONGO, TAUNTON

OUT NOW

SPINOUT NUGGETS

blow up®

30

1993 2023

A NIGHT OF LIVE MUSIC & DANCING

FRIDAY 24TH NOVEMBER

PAUL TUNKIN *(DJ)* THE BONGOLIAN *(live)* *plus special guests*

JAMBOREE *6 St Chad's Place, London WC1X 9HH*

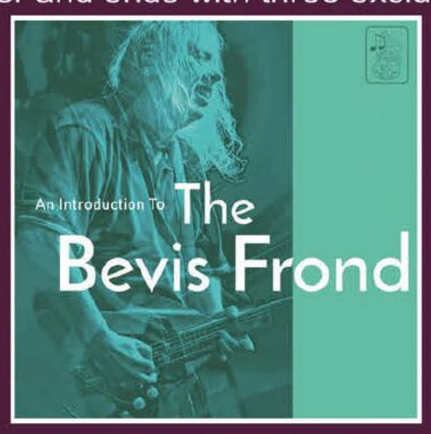
Doors: 8 pm · Carriages: 2 am · www.blowupclub.com

Fruits de Mer Records

psychedelia, krautrock, prog rock, acid folk - classic, long-lost and new

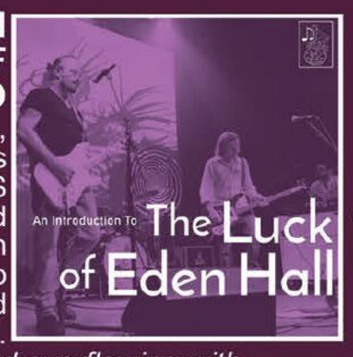
THE FISHHEADS 'LOBSTER BASQUE REPLICA' LP+CD
Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the aquarium, The Fishheads return, this time with an album of covers, including tracks originally recorded by Pink Floyd and Mighty Baby.
The Fishheads include Marc Swordfish, Anton Barbeau, Simon House, Icarus Peel and members of Astralasia.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BEVIS FROND CD
...although Nick Saloman really needs no introduction to Shindig! readers - a brilliant guitarist and songwriter, who has being following a fiercely independent path for over 50 years. This new set contains 70 minutes of recordings Nick has released through Fruits de Mer and ends with three exclusive demos.



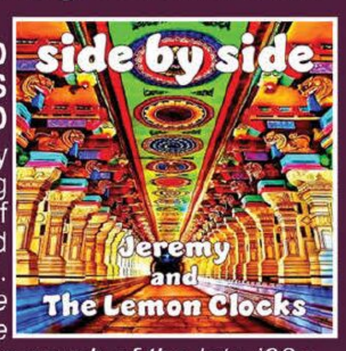
SENDELICA 'MAN, MYTH & MAGIC' 2xLP
a double LP, this is the third in the band's continuing look at mankind's relationship with its world, religion, magic and myths. Four sidelong instrumentals that flow from ambience to full-on spacerock.Gatefold die-cut sleeve, colour vinyl, printed inners and poster, this set looks almost as good as it sounds.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LUCK OF EDEN HALL CD
Fruits de Mer retrospective, pulling together tracks released by this great US psychedelic rock band during their 10 years with the label, together with two previously-unreleased covers.
"Fearless, ambitious and overflowing with possibilities" Andy Morten, Shindig!



HANFORD FLYOVER 'SOURCE' CD
Josh and Holly deliver a stunning new album of original songs. Folktronica meets motorik grooves, and Fruits de Mer proves it doesn't spend its time entirely in 1967.

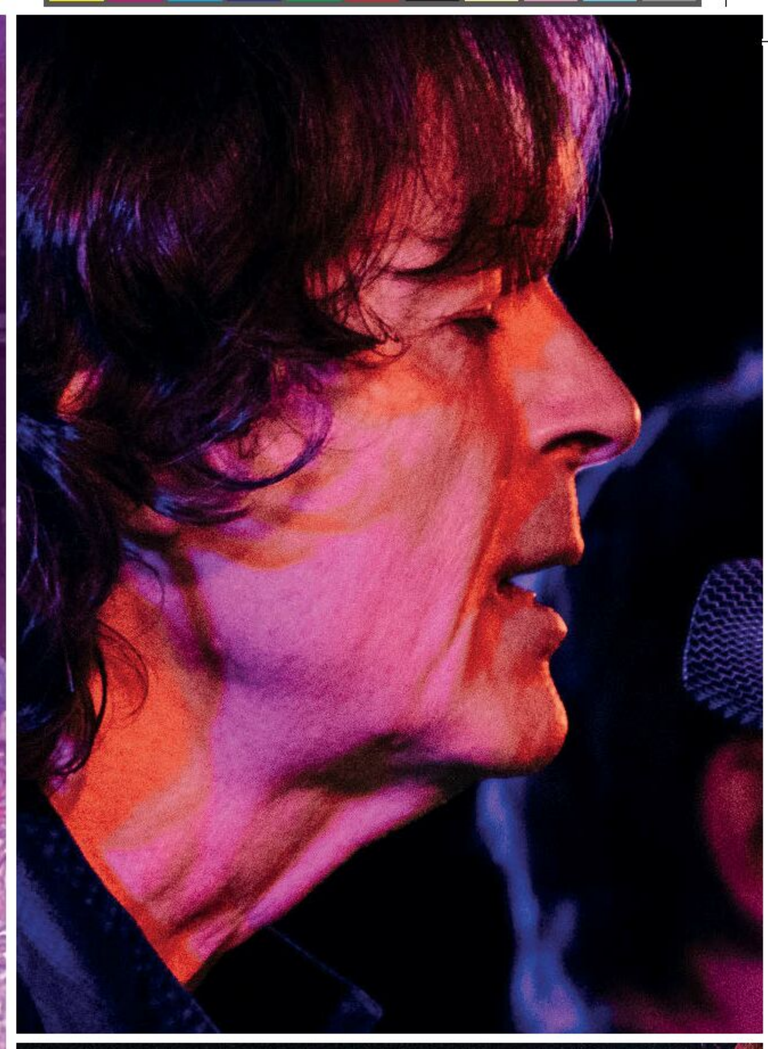
JEREMY AND THE LEMON CLOCKS 'SIDE BY SIDE' 2xCD
Over two hours of covers by Jeremy Morris, including massively extended versions of 'Green Tambourine' and 'Crimson and Clover'.
"a dazzlingly ambitious salute to selected peaks from the golden age of Anglo-American psych of the late '60s and early '70s...a genuinely epic undertaking by anyone's standards" Graham Bent, Shindig!



read all about it at...

www.fruitsdemerrecords.com

Daniel Romano's Outfit
PHOTO: MARK RAISON



Those Pretty Wrongs' Jody Stephens and Luther Russell
PHOTOS: ED SMITH

DANIEL ROMANO'S OUTFIT

The Omeara, London

SATURDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER

It's the miracle that a blessed few are privileged to witness. Every year, Daniel Romano sails The Atlantic (the Canadian doesn't fly) to play compact rooms in the UK. We check if the venue has finally ballooned to contain his genius, but no, it's still our secret: DR and the Outfit are the most compelling, electrifying live act around.

Omeara's Outfit is Juliana Riolino on backing vocals, Carson McHone bringing a third voice and adding percussion, brother Ian on drums and Roddy Rosetti on bass. There isn't a dropped syllable or fluffed solo, not a beat spare. But it's not just polished; they fully inhabit these powerful songs with a discipline and a passion that aren't normally friends. There's love and generosity on show, as Romano deflects attention to the talent around him. Can't find a support act worthy? Rotate your frontline, and it's Juliana Riolino and The Outfit, for her 40 minutes, including a stripped-down cover of Vashti Bunyan's 'Diamond Day'. The frontman who steps aside to showcase a friend's work, is accomplished, confident and lives to serve the song – anyone's song.

We start and finish early with no let-up – a supercharged medley of the titles he writes like breathing. 'Nocturne Child' kicks us into gear with a razor-edge Rickenbacker riff, 'Roya' drives rather than lilts, 'Impossible Green' hits harmonic perfection, with Riolino and McHone supplying texture and richness. Two encores and we're onto the street in an adrenaline daze two hours before the pubs shut.

£15. A miracle. Keep it to yourself and see you again next year.

Matt Allwright

THE CLIENTELE

The Lodge Room, Los Angeles

THURSDAY 17TH AUGUST

Los Angeles is eager to hear their beloved Clientele. It's been six long years since the softly dynamic UK group graced our ballrooms. In July, the trio released *I Am Not There Anymore*, a record rooted in orchestral folk-pop with the new and welcome addition of electronica. On stage, they lack the bells and whistles that were used in the recording of the new record, but still transmit a decidedly new sound—one of orchestral meandering *a la Bryter Layter* meets *Moon Safari* meets *The Well-Tempered Clavier*.

On guitar and vocals, Alasdair MacLean tiptoes a tightrope. His brassy guitar picks up the melody as soon as his soothing voice lays it down. It produces a lulling, even doting, effect. MacLean makes it seem as if immense care is put into each note. Sometimes his preciousness gets the better of him (and us), but, more often than not, the intricate melodies keep any sleepy grudges at bay. Bassist James Hornsey and drummer Mark Keen perform their own highwire act, subtly incorporating jazz, classical and electronic rhythms into each tune. Their dialogues hypnotise, and the mumbled lyrics daze. They perform their new songs with a bit of trepidation, but mostly ease. 'Claire's Not Real' grabs us as the start, while 'Lady Grey' and 'I Dreamed Of You, Maria' sustain our eager attention. MacLean gives a heartfelt thanks to the US city that bolstered The Clientele, while we return with our own appreciative cheers.

Tess Carges

JON BRION

Largo At The Coronet, Los Angeles

THURSDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

After four long, short, drunkening, sobering years, Jon Brion makes a triumphant return home to The Largo at The Coronet, where a whole buncha nerds are waiting with Guinness and glee. Brion has a long list of titles: film composer (*Ladybird*, *Punch Drunk Love*, *Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind*), collaborator and/or producer (with the likes of Fiona Apple, Elliott Smith, Aimee Mann), pianist, guitarist and singer. Long ago, when the Apples, Smiths and Manns of the world were getting their start, Brion was playing a regular show at The Largo each week, sharing the stage with his collaborators and charming the audience with his witticisms and uncannily perfect pitch.

Known for his ability to improvise and his vast knowledge of music, Brion's shows are rarely rehearsed or planned. Walking out on stage to a drowning applause, he quickly sits at his upright piano, strings exposed, with a few foot pedals beneath it and a little clavichord stationed nearby for his hands to wander over to when the piano just isn't sparkling enough. It's one of Brion's trademarks: sparkling. Though he's collaborated with all sorts of artists and composed the music for generically diverse films, he's got a trademarked sound that combines jazz, pop and a heavy dose of melancholy.

At the piano, you can see his ears thinking and his mind listening. He meanders through his catalogue at times with the help of John C Reilly and the dextrous bassist Sebastian Steinberg.

"We check if the venue has finally ballooned to contain his genius, but no, it's still our secret: DR and the Outfit are the most compelling, electrifying live act around"

Vanity Mirror
PHOTO: JON 'MOJO' MILLS

He covers Roxy Music's 'More Than This' and even performs a strangely endearing rendition of 'Funkytown'. Notorious for closing his shows with an audience suggestion, he asks us what we'd like to sing. 'God Only Knows' and 'Life On Mars?' destroy the competition, and some of us are left blearily singing about Mickey Mouse and cows. Talk about the best-selling show...

Tess Carges

THOSE PRETTY WRONGS
THE CRESCENT, YORK

TUESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER

Stepping out from behind the drumkit to sing with only an acoustic guitarist for accompaniment must take some nerve, especially if you are not exactly recognised as a lead singer. Yet, for Jody Stephens, erstwhile sticksman with the legendary Big Star, this seems like the most natural thing to do. In the autumn of his years, Stephens, alongside Luther Russell, is experiencing something of a late career renaissance. As Those Pretty Wrongs they have released three albums of wonderfully homespun songs to date.

In this suitably intimate setting, a quietly reverential audience are seated in eager anticipation of some Big Star songs, yet tonight's set is centred around their latest and best yet LP, *Holiday Camp*, played in full sequential order.

Of course, Big Star aficionados won't need reminding Stephens is no slouch when it comes to singing. Whilst not the most technical singer, he has an everyman touch that connects on a personable level. His songs, although whimsical, are perfectly crafted with intricate harmonies and deft melodies. Stephens notably takes the lead on all the songs, with Luther adding textured harmonies and gleaming guitar patterns that tantalisingly echo the acoustic strains of Big Star's most tender moments. The chemistry between the two is infectious. You get the impression Stephens is one of the good guys and deserves his time in the spotlight. The duo closes an entertaining evening by climbing down from the stage to serenade us with a special unplugged take on 'Thirteen' and 'Way Out West'.

Paul Ritchie

SAY SHE SHE
Lodge Room, Los Angeles

FRIDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

The stage of Lodge Room has never seemed so small as Say She She take the stage. The band, led by the trio of classically trained singers Piya Malik, Sabrina Mileo Cunningham and Nya Gazelle Brown, are quickly rising to fame. In the short time since they released their first single, Say She She have already slayed Glastonbury, The Hollywood Bowl and are continuing their tour across the US for the next few months before they head to Europe. Packed like discodelic sardines, we shimmy our way to the front, towards the hazy angels in white and the pulsating bass. Behind the three apparitions, a four-piece band plays ecstatically. It's very hard not to be ecstatic in the presence of Say She She. Even while performing their angriest protest anthems (like the fantastic 'NORMA,') they don't hide the fact that they love what they do.

Their music draws from funk, disco, soul and pop, but their sound is one of a kind. Though all three singers seem to have a four-octave range, Malik, centre stage, grounds the group with her alto, Bollywood-inspired inflections. Cunningham tilts the show towards theatrics with her soaring operatic falsetto while Gazelle Brown rouses us with her lower sound, most impressively on the smooth and aching 'Bleeding Heart.' Speeding through their catalogue, Say She She shows off much of fantastic new album *Silver* and some older already near-classics. The LA crowd is stunned, but never too stunned to boogie.

Tess Carges

VANITY MIRROR
The Night Owl, London

WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER

The evening of a national transport strike it may well be, but down at The Night Owl we don't care – Vanity Mirror are transporting us to a world of their own devising. It's a place of soaring Emitt Rhodes-style vocal melodies over classic descending chords, fantastic songcraft, and a dress sense like psychedelicised Open University lecturers. The LA/Toronto band are all big ties, mustard-coloured waistcoats, mini-dresses and brown corduroy jackets.

Honed to perfection after a seven-date European tour, their playing is super-tight, and their songs so full of joy that it's impossible not to get swept up on their sound. They're excited to be playing London and it shows – the wonderful high-sliding, bopping basslines and dual-keyboard filigrees from borrowed bassist Madeline and keys player Gijs, in addition to VM mainstays Brent Randall and Johnny Toomey leave us in no doubt that this is a *band* now. Together they transcend Vanity Mirror's origins as a recording project, fleshing out the studio versions of new songs such as 'Look At The Clouds' and 'Tinpot Lane' as well as older material such as Gentle Brent's 'Lollipop Girl' into something rawer and wilder.

A stunning version of Electric Looking Glass's 'Purple, Red, Green, Blue & Yellow' closes the show, driven by Johnny's propulsive drumming and Brent's Beatles '66-style riffery, causing him to snap a second string on his Gibson SG – earlier on, a member of the audience had had to leap up onstage to remove the first snapped string, mid-song, as the band continued to play on regardless. Another perfect moment in an evening of many.

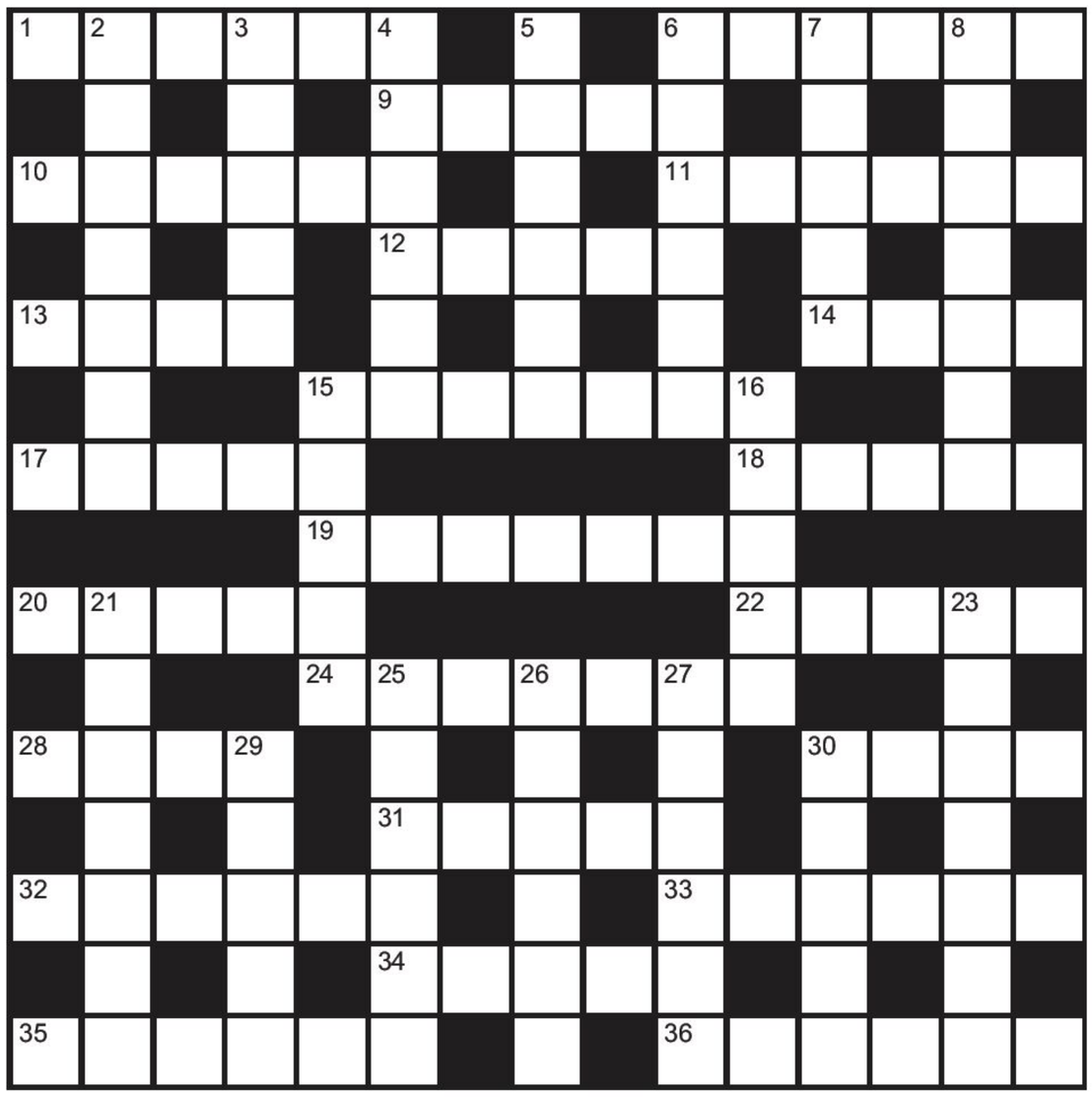
Stephen Wood

Prize Crossword

by Stuart Draper

Brighton label Two Piers is fast cornering the market in stylishly presented, thoughtfully curated genre comps with, in their words, "no boundaries". Following around half a dozen outings, including *Shindig!* office favourites *Pop Psychédélique (The Best Of French Psychedelic Pop 1964-2019)*, *Music For The Stars (Celestial Music 1960-1979)* and *Lounge Psychédélique (The Best Of Lounge & Exotica 1954-2022)*, comes ***WIG OUT! FREAK OUT!***, whose subtitle *(Freakbeat & Mod Psychedelia Floor Fillers 1964-1969)* says it all really. Transatlantic '60s bangers from The Sonics to The Action to The Open Mind. And we have a copy to give away.

To enter, simply send your completed crossword to *Shindig!* #145 Crossword, 40 Windsor Crescent, Frome, Somerset BA11 2EA or email a legible scan of it to win@shindig-magazine.com with the words "S! #145 crossword competition" in the subject line, no later than 7th December. And don't forget to include your name and address!



Across

1/4 Random tenure troubled Jack Cooper, gave early instructions on how to live (6,6)
6 It takes a second for The Move to identify a track (6)
9 El Michels Affair had ultimately edited prior to themes (5)
10 California band heads Jason Pierce's troupe (6)
11 Love requires husband, fancy almond provides answer (3,3)
12 Island debut for The Long Ryders concludes with topless bony lump (5)
13 Use the centre for Ghost Funk Orchestra's bandleader (4)
14 Stax singer shorn of ban obtains issue 77 cover (4)
15 Phil Cordell and Whyte Horses add rely unreliably for Rosa Luxemburg perhaps (3,4)
17 Single reverse, almost next to (1-4)
18 Some gave a bit to make 2018 Seven That Spells opus (5)
19 Intensive Care Unit witnesses Daevid Allen's last with Gong (1,3,3)
20 See 28
22 Knead roughly ends Supersister starter single (5)
24 Big Star film was not wanted in Washington weirdly – this can hurt me (7)
28/20 Variations vary megacolon to invite others (4,5)
30 Touchstone or Dogberry, nobody's stopping Dan Penn (4)
31 Argentine misses rant to provide poor poor finish for Damon (5)
32 Lowell Levinger: botanic berry (6)
33 Traffic may be marred before fantasy (4,2)
34 Shock start for The Turtles, and mostly it's hell (5)
35 Admire arrangement when in front of the foot of Teardrops' *Kilimanjaro* (1,5)
36 First Lady with nasty beginning creates Matthews Southern Comfort track (4,2)

Down

2 Original Bosstown artists, former mods shore up surprisingly (7)
3 Middle and near the middle, famed Covent Garden club (5)
4 See 1 Across
5 Bureaucratically (yet not accurately), we dig The Fugs' waltz (6)
6 Doesn't mix but follows naturally with The Avant-Garde (6)
7 This Cambridge conclusion makes a *Shindig!* media partner and sponsor (5)
8 How great was Simon Smith's dancing bear? (7)
15 Ghost demands reduced foreigner figurehead for Canadian band (5)
16 Assorted agony aunts shun Satan for our issue 91 and 126 cover star (5)
21 An older altered end to Deke (7)
23 Am I love? Could be on Banchee debut (7)
25 Unwed unusual word games come to John's Children album with a Beatles audience (6)
26 Band strictly from Portland hired gun without ID in error (6)
27 The Roves' factory, stylus suppliers (6)
29 Absent of insult, neutralises nests before a mirror with Children of the Mushroom after you can't (5)
30 No takers in flea markets? Get Slade in! (5)

Name

Address

Phone **Email**

Issue 144 crossword solution

1 S	2 E	N	D	3 M	E	4 A	P	5 O	S	6 T	C	A	7 R	D
	Y			I		V		R		H			O	
8 L	E	M	O	N		E		W		9 E	A	R	T	H
	T			10 D	E	N	H	O	L	M			O	
11 B	O	12 W	E	D		U		R		13 O	P	14 E	R	15 A
E		O		16 E	M	E	17 R	S	O	N		L		R
18 L	O	U	I	S		19 S	E	E		20 E	X	A	C	T
I		L		T			R			Y		S		I
21 N	A	D	I	R		22 C	U	23 E		24 G	A	T	E	S
D		N		25 U	P	A	N	D	G	O		I		T
26 A	27 T	T	I	C		L		W		28 R	A	C	29 E	S
	U			30 T	A	L	L	Y	H	O			N	
31 A	L	I	B	I		O		N		32 U	N	I	T	Y
	I			O		F		N		N			E	
33 S	P	R	I	N	G	F	I	E	L	D	P	A	R	K

NOMAD EEL RECORDS

...where the music takes you!

www.nomadeelrecords.com

Music Stores: U.S./England - www.cobraside.com - Europe: www.clear-spot.nl

New Distractions

by Dream Phases - NER-048

Emerging from the City of Angels' neo-psychedelic rock scene in 2017, Dream Phases reflects Calfornia's natural splendor and adventuresome inner spirit in its music.

The earthy-yet-exalted sounds of the Byrds, the Beach Boys and Crosby, Stills, Nash ,Young – as well as latter-dayartists like the Rain Parade, Elliott Smith and Autolux – figure into the band's family tree. Whilethis lineage is worth noting, what comes through in the band's latest work is an individual approach that translates the experiences of its members into something undeniably compelling.

First track to last, you can hear this vitality in New Distractions, Dream Phases' sophomore album.

Vinyl LP, Cassette, CD
available through Nomad Eel Records

EXCLUSIVE RELEASES

Hold Drugs Dear

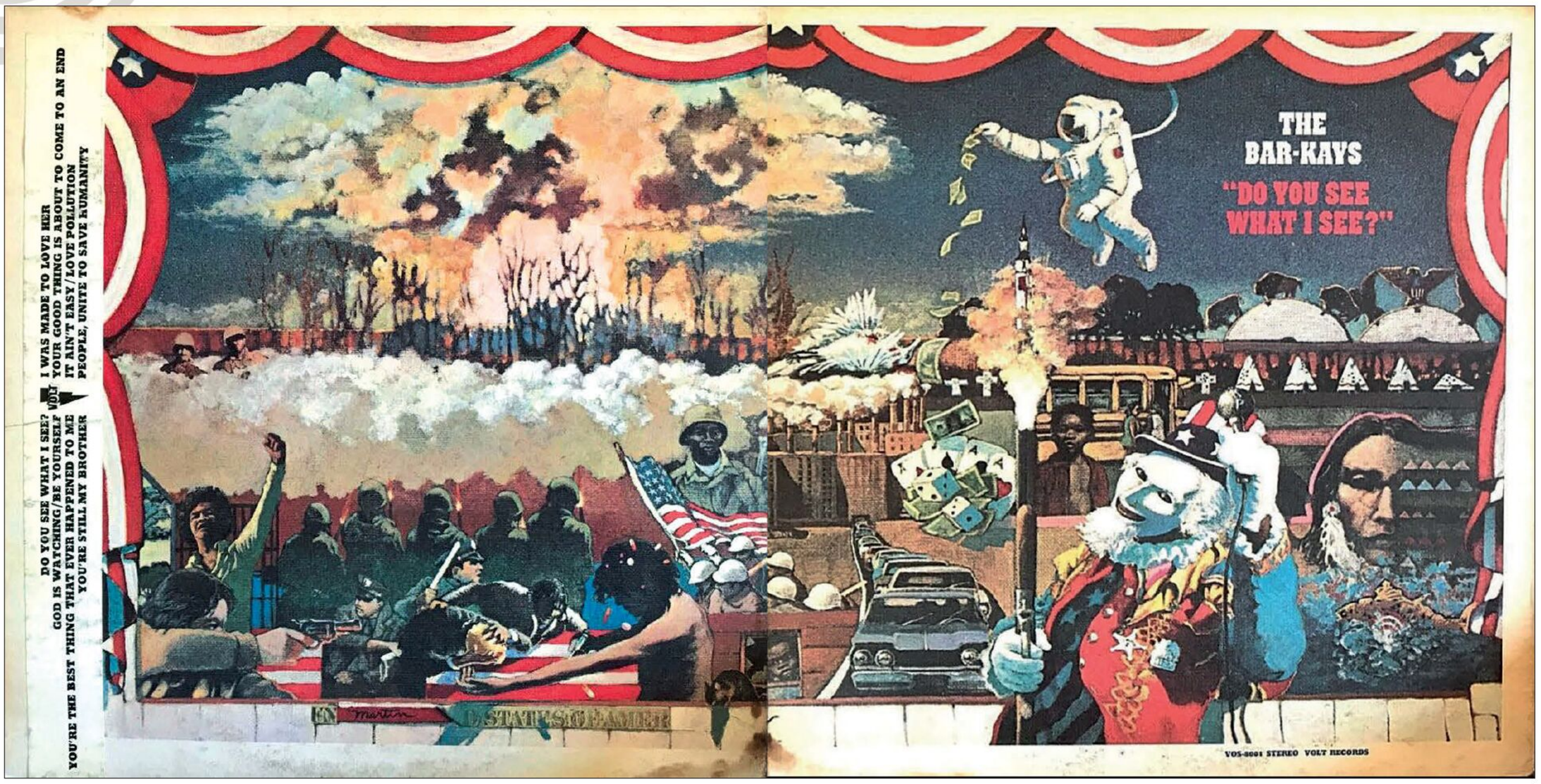
By R.J. Bloke - NER-049

Hold Drugs Dear is a dynamic solo effort from RJ Bloke, front man & songwriter for Los Angeles based alt-country, americana, roots rock quartet Patrolled By Radar.

These warm and urgent analog recordings feature an array of stellar guests including Alex Moore, Spencer Livingston (Livingmore), Eli Wulfmeier (Leroy from the North), Peter Curry (Los Straitjackets, Nick Lowe), and Davey Allen (Eric Burdon, Davey & The Midnights).

This collection of well-crafted poetic and melodic songs are sure to appeal to fans of Dylan, Ray Davies, Jeff Tweedy, Lennon & Paul McCartney and many more, truly magificent.

Vinyl LP, Cassette, CD
available through Nomad Eel Records



The Bar-Kays

Do You See What I See?

VOLT, US, 1972

COVER ILLUSTRATION: JACK MARTIN, ART DIRECTION: THE GRAFFITERIA – DAVID KRIEGER, PHOTOGRAPHY: SUE GREENE

CHRISTOPHER BUDD surveys a microcosm of Vietnam-era Black rock

On a video call from his home in Pennsylvania, Jack Martin leafs through piles of his work, beautiful painted covers for Lonnie Liston Smith, Wilson Pickett and Zappa alumnus Steve Vai. We both pause at the richly detailed illustration that makes up the cover of The Bar-Kays' 1972 Volt disc *Do You See What I See?*

"That was an answer for me after coming out of Vietnam," Jack recounts breezily. "I was drafted, so I had a two-year interruption after I graduated from art college in Philadelphia. I went over as an artillery man, and two days after I got in-country, I talked to a colonel. I said to him, 'Any art jobs in the military?' He picked up a phone, hung it up. He said, 'Get your shit together. I'll see you in about an hour. You're gonna have a truck come pick you up.' I didn't even ask where I was going. I didn't care. It might not be artillery!" he laughs. "I ended up working as basically an art director for the psychological warfare headquarters in Saigon. I was in charge of two magazines a month, all the propaganda, so I got to do that instead of artillery, and it really kind of saved my ass!"

Jack had a plan as soon as he got back to the States. "I got right to New York four days after hitting my parents' home. I started freelancing, carrying my old portfolio around, got a couple jobs and started to get a rep." Album cover work was a natural fit for Jack, but there was a culture shock to get over. "I was trying to get back into the onslaught of commercialism that was all hitting me in the face after being out of the country for over a year. I had to numb myself to getting used to the idea of all this propaganda of all the American advertising; I realised I wasn't used to it."

Jack is quick to point out that it was The Bar-Kays' lyrics that really formed the jumping off point for this particular piece of artwork. From the opening exhortation of the album's title track, it's clear that this is an album with a social conscience, observing a highly febrile time in US history and repeatedly pointing out the difficulty of maintaining solidarity and brotherly love in an angry, divided world. *Plus* ça *change*. "I was in Vietnam when Martin Luther King was assassinated," Jack remembers. "Robert Kennedy was killed before I got back. We were all thinking, 'Are we bringing our M16s home? What are we having? A revolution?' It was intense.

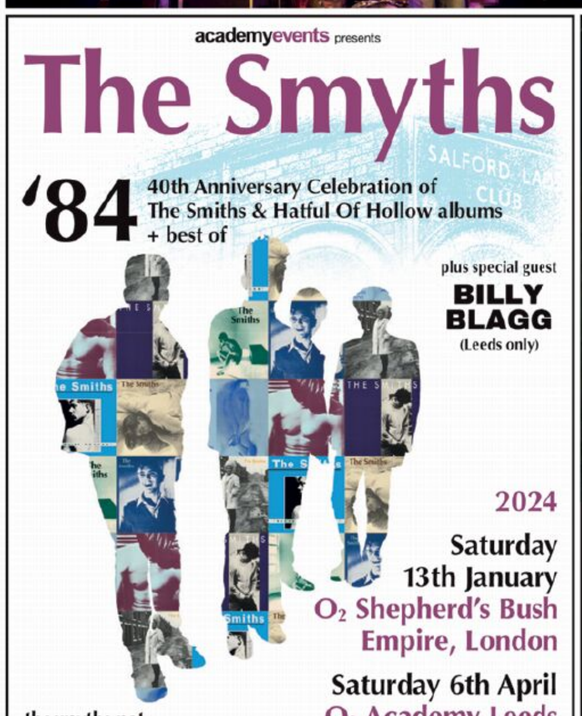
"I had a guy shooting up on the cover, had Kent State on that cover. *Everything's* on that cover! I vented, I really got it out"

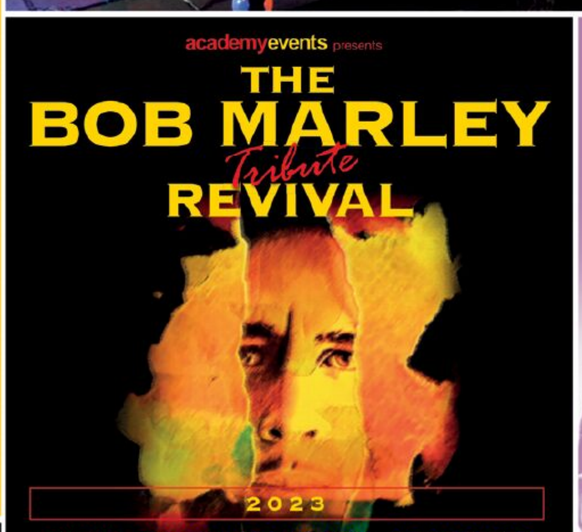
"I vented all my anger on that cover! So I had an Indian [tipi] as a shooting gallery, buffalo as a shooting gallery. I had Uncle Sam as a bit of a maniacal clown. I had a guy shooting up on the cover, had Kent State on that cover. *Everything's* on that cover! I vented, I really got it out," he laughs.

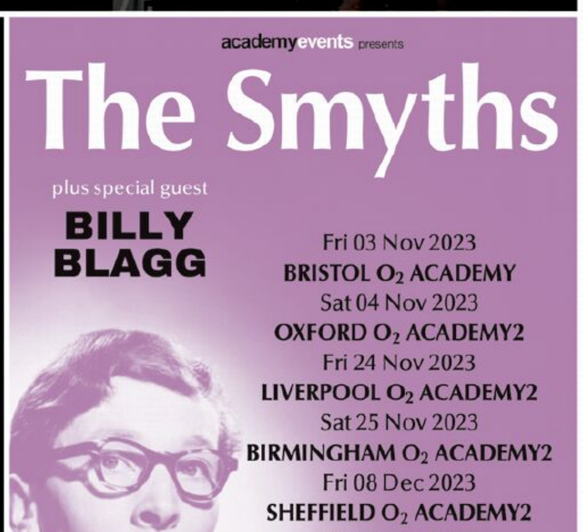
His system somewhat cleansed, Jack was able to carve out a long and successful career in New York. "I lived briefly in Manhattan down near the Village. But then I moved over to Fort Lee right across the George Washington Bridge. I would jump on a bus or I'd drive into New York and go take interviews with art directors. And back then that was wearing out shoe leather. It wasn't on the internet. It was 'Go see 'em!'"

After four decades Jack eventually moved back down towards Philadelphia, even teaching part time at his old *alma mater* Pennsylvania College Of Art (now The University Of The Arts). "I had a rep and I didn't have to stay in the city up there. I didn't like living in Manhattan. It's too noisy! I like being out in the countryside a little more." And although Jack learned Photoshop, the modern world of digital design wasn't for him. "I decided, 'Nah, I'm pretty analogue. I'll stick with the brushes.' I really don't want commissions anymore. I don't want deadlines. I did that all my life and I'm at a point now where I'm doing this for shits and giggles. I'm enjoying my retirement. At this point I'm kind of unavailable." S!

Academy Events present







TICKETMASTER.CO.UK

vinyl clicks

In which **MICHAEL BJÖRN** investigates worthy albums that have somehow eluded reissue, compilation or acclaim

TERRY FRIEND & FRIENDS

Come The Day

(Tramp, UK, 1977)

Although Terry Friend had nothing to do with the punk movement of 1977, his DIY approach was nevertheless of its time. Terry was doing lo-fi pop even before Martin Newell had formed The Cleaners From Venus, making *Come The Day* an interesting piece of slap-happy pop history.

Friend first committed himself to record in '74, on *Follow The Sun* by R Van Spyk & Friends, recorded on Easter Saturday at Acorn Records Studio in Stonesfield, Oxfordshire. Friend co-wrote all songs with Rob Van Spyk, except his first solo composition 'Come The Day' on which he sang and played acoustic guitar. Later the same year, Van Spyk used leftover songs to record the Stonefield Tramp album *Dreaming Again*… (reissued by Guerssen in 2010) with some friends. Although Friend had co-written five of the eight tracks, he did not appear on the album. "The Van Spyk album was recorded in four hours, and the Stonefield Tramp one took eight hours," said Friend. "No producer was involved."

It would take Friend three years before he was back in a studio again. *Come The Day* revisited his first titular solo composition, while a set of friendly and slightly lethargic pop ditties with a hippy ethos expanded on the formula. Friend was helped out by Tony Panico on guitar, Martin Wood on bass, Keith Farr on drums and Maggie Spong on the odd piano bit but also, crucially, on vocals. They were musicians from local Letchworth bands Quinquereme and Change. In addition, the recording facility was a marvel of professionalism, comparatively speaking. "*Come The Day* was recorded in a 16-track studio, during the late summer of '77, and I think it took about three eight-hour sessions to complete the work," said Friend. "The other two albums were recorded as 'straight takes' of a performance. So, quicker, cheaper, and not so professional."

Still, all things are relative. "There was no producer involved at all, just the members of the band and the studio engineer," explained Friend. "Each song was recorded as a basic track using the whole band playing together, very much like a live performance. Then each person and instrument was recorded again, separately, and it was all mixed together in a final session."

The direct approach allows the songs to breathe and reveal their charm. There's a whimsy and amateurism in the songwriting that's enhanced rather than diminished by the helter skelter approach. Recordings were done at Luton's Piper Studio, with John Bachini twiddling the knobs. "I recall the engineer remarking that he thought the album sounded very much like a live recording of a performance, rather than a studio recorded piece of work."

Terry Friend would go on to record other privately released albums, but *Come The Day* remains his most inspired and interesting effort, albeit a ramshackle one.

Terry recording his vocals in 1977

audio heaven

MURDO MATHEWSON surveys the latest hi-fi and audio gadgetry

BACK ON THE ROAD AGAIN

ARCAM A5

£749

arcam.co.uk

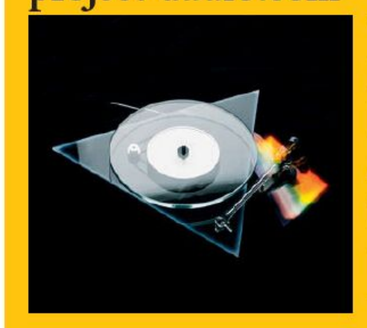
The A5 stereo amplifier is part of ARCAM's new Radia Series, which totals three amps, a CD player, and a music streamer. The A5 provides 50 watts per channel and houses a moving magnet phone stage, making it "turntable ready". It's also ready to receive digital tunes – via Bluetooth wireless or coaxial and optical inputs – and it'll connect to your headphones via cable or Bluetooth.

ALL THAT YOU SEE

Pro-Ject The Dark Side of the Moon Turntable

£1,599

project-audio.com



The latest addition to Pro-Ject's handmade in Europe "Artist Series" line is a *bona fide* premium design, including a solid aluminium platter, low resonance tonearm, and Pick it PRO cartridge. You also get a prism-shaped plinth and – somewhat fantastically – a beam of white light-aping on/off lever and an LED-backlit rainbow.

CUM ON FEEL THE NOIZE (CANCELLING)

Sennheiser Accentum Wireless

£159

sennheiser-hearing.com

The Sennheiser Accentum Wireless active noise cancelling (ANC) headphones support aptX HD audio quality, can pair to two devices simultaneously, and the companion app enables a five-band EQ. The maker promises up to 50 hours of listening (with ANC-enabled), and the cans' dual mics feature wind-reduction mode, making working from the beach more than just a pipe dream.

STEREO, OUT ON THE STREETS YOU KNOW

Austrian Audio MiCreator Studio

£189.00

The MiCreator Studio is a USB microphone and audio interface in one. Its twin 3.5mm connections let you connect a second device – for interviews and stereo recordings – or plug in two pairs of headphones so that, say, Liam and Noel can easily "collaborate" with each other. The £279 MiCreator System Set includes the Studio mic, Satellite mic, cables, and a stereo bar.

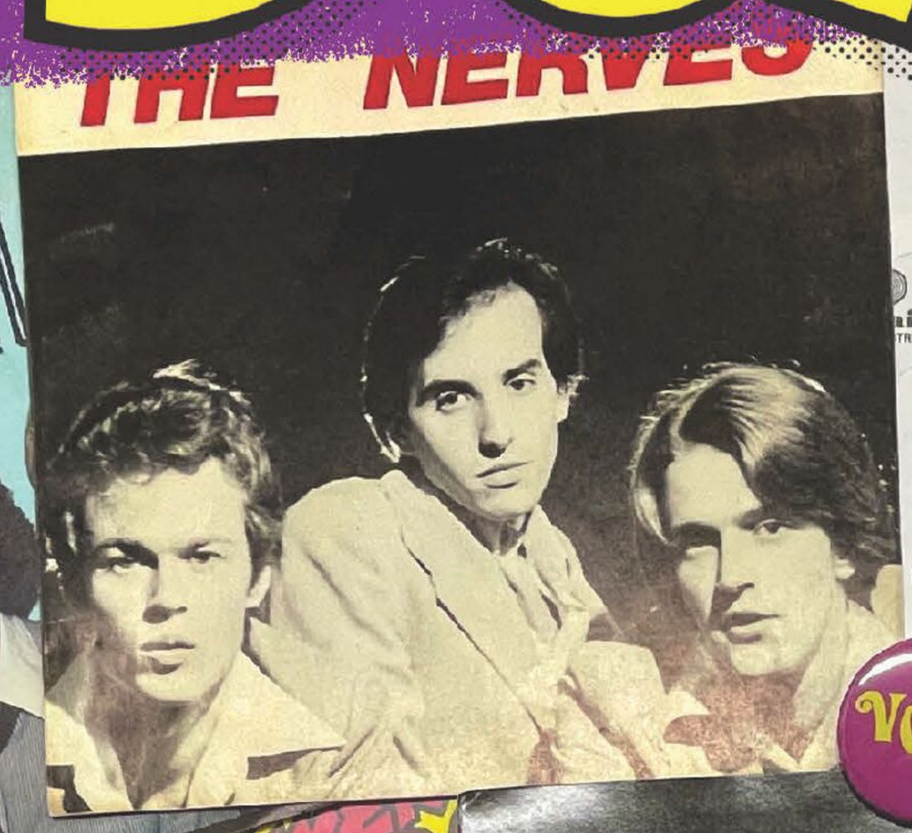
"THE BEST NEWS, REVIEWS AND INTERVIEWS, STORIES AND DISCOGRAPHIES – EVERY FOUR WEEKS"

MADNESS – BRITAIN'S GREATEST SINGLES BAND SINCE THE BEATLES!
INTERVIEW + DISCOGRAPHY

PAUL RODGERS ON FREE, BAD COMPANY, THE FIRM, QUEEN + MORE – PLUS HEFTY DISCOG!... ANDREW GOLD'S PSYCH-POP FORAY... WHEN FRANKIE LAINE WAS BIGGER THAN SINATRA... FRIENDS AGAIN'S POST-POSTCARD POP...

ON SALE NOW IN ALL THE USUAL PLACES, OR AVAILABLE TO ORDER FROM HERE:
SHOP.RECORDCOLLECTORMAG.COM

BOMP!


THE NERVES

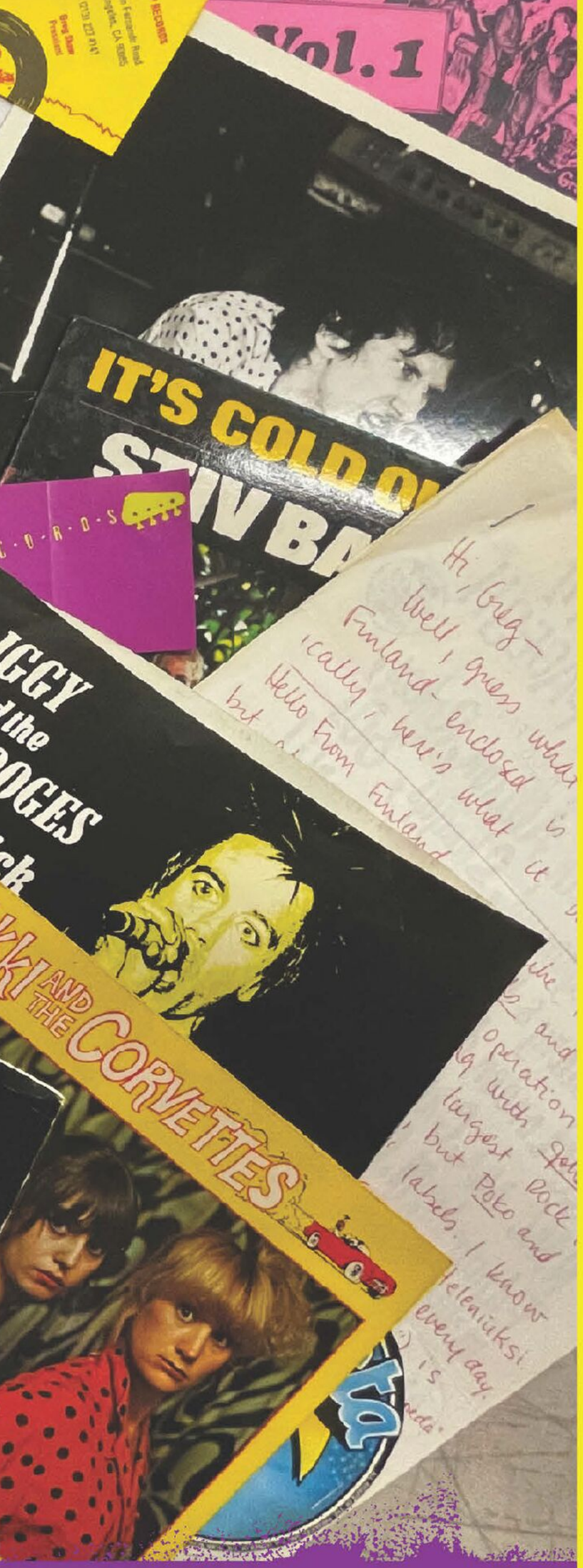
POWER POP!
THE WHO! EASYB
RASPBERRIE
CREATION

SRH/Live in Cleveland & Detroit
A
XLII
60
maxell
maxell XLII

KILL CITY

SIDE B
COMMENTS
PRESSING

Vol. 1


IT'S COLD O
STIV BA

VOXX RECORDS